ELIZABETH COOPER PIXTON

Her life, her times, her family.

ABSTRACT

A motherless shoemaker's daughter rose from poverty in Victorian England to leadership in 20th century Utah.

Kim Bateman

Spring City, Utah -- 2022

Table of Contents

Introduction 4
Elizabeth Pixton's Relatives Mentioned in this Book 6
Chapter One --The Shoemaker's Daughter 8
Chapter 2 -- Elizabeth's Early Adult Life 14
Chapter Three -- Life in Utah 40
Chapter Four – Life after Robert 70
Epilogue – The Wrigley Family in America 90
Appendix 92

Introduction

It has been an honor to write about Elizabeth Pixton, my third great grandmother, but I need to confess that I didn't exactly choose to do it—if anything, it chose me. A year ago, I couldn't have told you her name, although I was quite familiar with her husband Robert Pixton. I had written an in-depth biography of Thomas and Mary Bateman and knew the story of Robert's interaction with that pioneer family. (Robert worked for Thomas' older brother Joseph in Salford, Lancashire and accompanied him to Nauvoo. Thomas later baptized Robert in Augusta, Iowa.)

I happened to notice that Mary Elizabeth Pixton, Robert's third child, was born at a place in Arkansas called Island 69 on the Mississippi River, which piqued my interest, so I researched the history of the island, thinking I would write a brief note about it to post on Mary Elizabeth's page in FamilySearch. But when I learned that Robert was in Arkansas to meet the wife he had left in England, a multitude of questions arose about Elizabeth Cooper, which I couldn't answer after reading her brief autobiography and her several biographical sketches, so I decided to write a short piece about her early life before she immigrated. That led me to also write about Nauvoo, but it didn't feel right to stop there. I was on a slippery slope and couldn't stop myself for months. And here we are now with a whole biography.

I chose to focus on Elizabeth Pixton rather than her husband for a number of reasons, most importantly because so much has already been written about Robert, and an important scholarly book on his life in the works. Of course, I can't write about Elizabeth without telling some of Robert's story, but I have tried to keep it at a minimum. And I was troubled by the imbalance—maybe I'm becoming a feminist. Isn't a woman's story as important as a man's? The imbalance is partly Elizabeth's fault, though. She wrote only about a page and a half about herself while Robert conscientiously filled journals, which are now treasured. For example, we have detailed accounts of his years with the Mormon Battalion and of his mission to England. But there is practically nothing written during those periods by Elizabeth, who was busy having babies and keeping the family together.

Probably many of you readers are her descendants, just as I am, and may already have your own understanding of her life. If I have made errors, I hope you will approach me with charity to correct them. Also, it has been hard for me to choose between making Elizabeth's story readable and sharing all the details that I've discovered. I have opted to err on the side of more information, mitigating that where possible with explanatory footnotes which less interested readers can just skip over. Parts of the book might feel tedious--the details of Robert's trust, for example, or the real estate details of the downtown property--so I apologize in advance. Also, the names can be confusing. For example, there are far too many people named Elizabeth in this story. And there are placenames that changed with time, such as Taylorsville. Try to hang in there.

Finally, I want to thank those who have helped me on this project, especially my wife Linda, who is my proofreader and a sounding board to interpret my discoveries. I am indebted to Emily Crumpton-Deason at the Church History Library for providing insight, pointing me to useful materials, and for providing hours of research that I couldn't have done myself. I am also indebted to the several Relief Society secretaries who so faithfully kept minutes of meetings which were run by Elizabeth. These include Elizabeth's sister-wife Martha Silcock Pixton in the Leeds Ward, Rachael Spencer in North Jordan, Alice Harker in Taylorsville, and especially Armeda Snow Young in the Granite Stake, who took down every word in shorthand and spent many hours transcribing minutes which give priceless insight into Elizabeth's philosophy and faith. I owe special thanks to Paul Pixton, a professor of history and avid

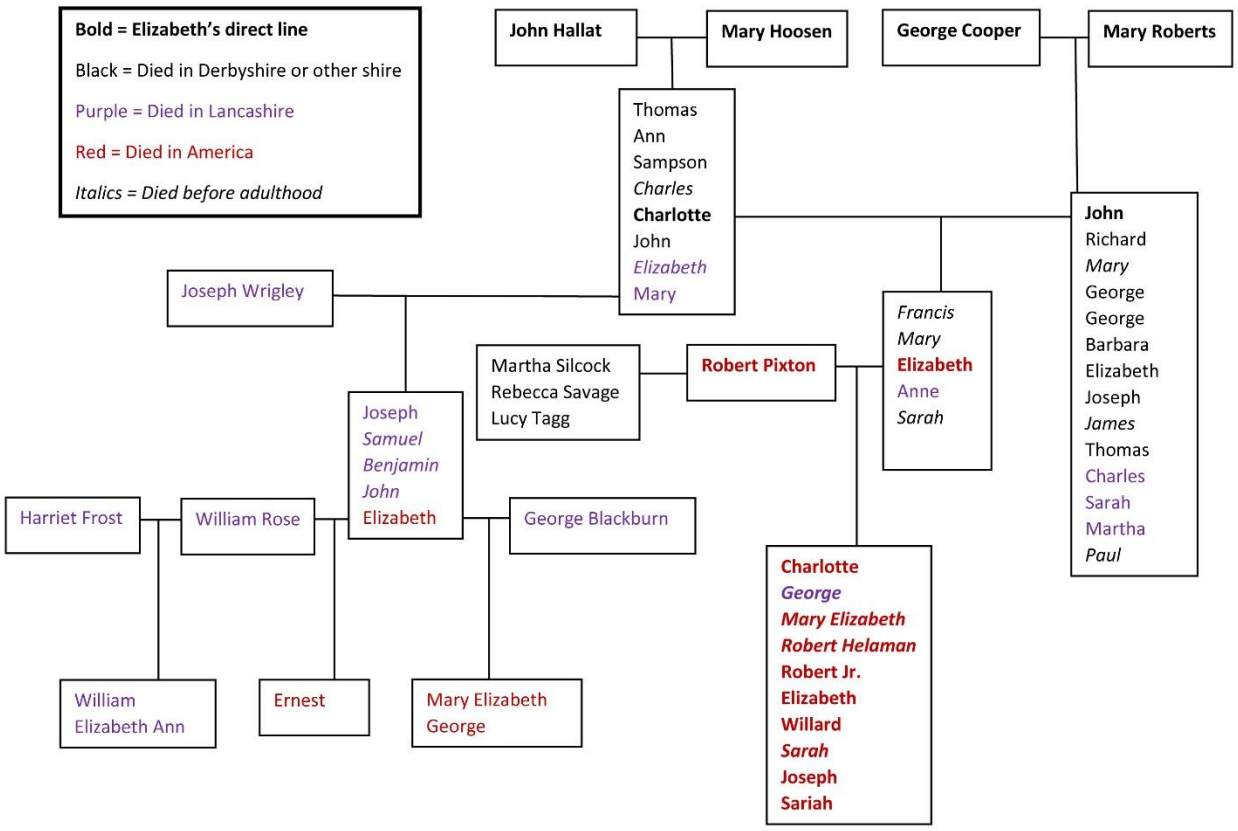
researcher of the Pixton family, who graciously read the first draft of this book, contributing welcome support and useful suggestions for improvement.

And most of all, I want to thank Elizabeth herself. She has become a hero to me and an inspiration.

Kim Bateman
Spring City, Utah
April 2022

kim.bateman@gmail.com

Elizabeth Pixton's Relatives Mentioned in this Book



Chapter One --The Shoemaker's Daughter

Elizabeth Cooper was born February 8, 1820, to John Cooper, a shoemaker, and Charlotte Hallat[1] in Chesterfield, Derbyshire a week after the death of King George III, against whom the American Declaration of Independence had been issued. She was a middle child, the third of five children—a boy and four girls. The families of both of Elizabeth's parents lived nearby.

Her paternal grandfather, George Cooper, was a bootmaker from Hasland, a village a mile or two south of Chesterfield. After Grandpa Cooper married Mary Roberts in the Anglican Church the couple moved to Newbold, a village on the northern edge of Chesterfield. Their first child was John Cooper, Elizabeth's father. When John was eight his family moved to Chesterfield, which in those days was the second most important town in Derbyshire with 4,300 people in 895 houses. Including the surrounding area, the population was about 8,000. A few years later John began his apprenticeship as a shoemaker.

A shoemaker is not a cobbler. In fact, to be called one would have been an insult. A cobbler was just a shoe repair man, not a producer of new shoes, and the cobbler trade did not require an apprenticeship. If a cobbler built shoes it had to be from used leather salvaged from worn out footwear. Another name for shoemaker was cordwainer, a term derived from a French word for the production of shoes for the wealthy fashioned from special horse leather produced in the Spanish town of Cordoba. Some shoemakers in John's day called themselves cordwainers to imply that they produced only the finest footwear. The distinction between the shoemaking and cobbler trades was waning at the beginning of the 19th century, when the introduction of mass manufacturing forced many shoemakers to accept lower paying cobbler work, which may explain some of the trouble which John later encountered. In the British census of 1841, I counted eight shoemakers in Chesterfield, so John would have had competition. In the much smaller town of Newbold there were five, all of whom called themselves cordwainers, suggesting that Newbold might have been a wealthy suburb.

John was probably just finishing his apprenticeship when he married Charlotte Hallat in Newbold on August 15, 1815. She was from Barlow, just a few miles up the road.

Barlow, Derbyshire

Charlotte's father, John Hallat, was the oldest boy in his family. He was born in Barlow but took an apprenticeship as a joiner (cabinet maker) in Nottingham where he married a local girl named Mary Hoosen. They had two children before returning home to Barlow in 1781 where he set up his own business. Elizabeth's mother Charlotte was their sixth child, born in 1795. Barlow is about six miles northwest of Chesterfield and isn't so much a village as a quaint assortment of tiny farm settlements along the road from

[1] There are many variations in spelling for this name including Hallatt, Hallott, Allot, and others. I'll try to stick with Hallat.

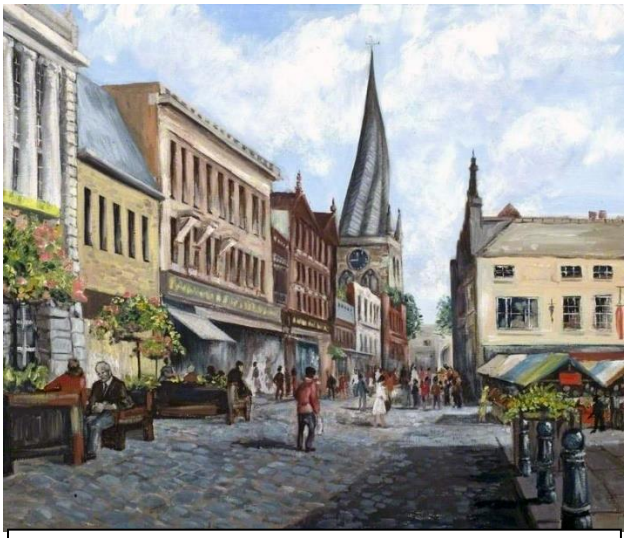
Newbold. Nowadays it is a popular tourist attraction, known for well dressing[2] in August each year, quaint buildings, and good trout fishing. It is located within the United Kingdom's first national park, the Peak District National Park, which was established in 1951.

When Elizabeth Cooper was born she had a four year old brother named Francis. She never knew her older sister Mary, who had lived only about six months. When Elizabeth was three, a sister named Anne was born, followed by Sarah two years later, but Sarah died at 19 months of age in October 1826.

Less than a week before Elizabeth's eighth birthday, her mother Charlotte Hallat Cooper died,[3] leaving John to take care of three children under 12. Seventy-five years later Elizabeth recalled,

> We were among the class known as poor people and therefore I had little or no schooling and was expected as soon as I was able to add my mite to our support. My mother died when I was about six years old,[4] and you all know what home becomes without a mother.[5]

I wish that Elizabeth had written more. How and where did she work as a child? What did her home become without a mother? Much of what follows next is my best guess from meager clues. I will try to be clear which parts are conjecture and which are based on evidence.



Chesterfield Church with famous twisted spire
Chesterfield Museum & Art Gallery

It is hard to imagine that any of the Cooper children received schooling at that time. Although in 1802 Parliament had limited a working day for children to 12 hours, working class children as young as five or six years of age were often employed in factories and on farms. It was during these years that Charles Dickens was working as a pre-teenager in a London boot-blacking company. In 1821 approximately 49% of the workforce was under 20.[6] Elizabeth did not tell us how her "mite" was earned. Chesterfield had doubled in size to about 11,000 inhabitants by 1828, as the industrial revolution drove people in all parts of England from farms to cities. The region offered wool, leather, and mining industries. Some of the first steam engines were developed there. One would hope that

---

[2] Well dressing, also known as well flowering, is a tradition in the Peak District of Derbyshire in which wells, springs, and other water sources are decorated with designs created from flower petals which began in the 1300s. Barlow is unique for decorating with whole flowers rather than their parts.

[3] Elizabeth's grandfather Hallat had died two years earlier, and according to unsourced family pedigrees, Elizabeth's grandmother Hallat died about the same time as her mother.

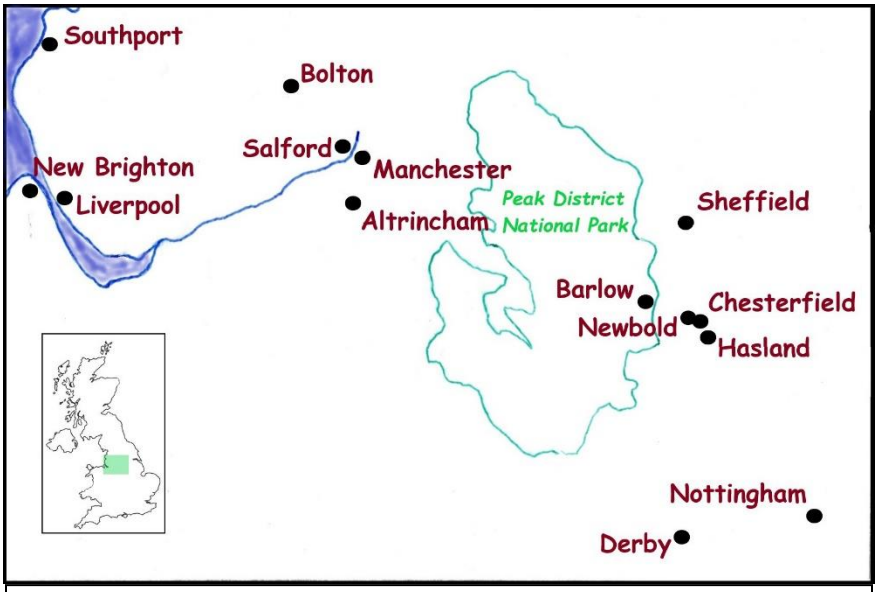
[4] In other documents she remembered correctly that her age at her mother's death was seven.

[5] From Elizabeth's autobiography written 1900. FamilySearch, memories, KWV3-GVF.

[6] The three laws which most impacted the employment of children in the textile industry were the Cotton Factories Regulation Act of 1819 (which set the minimum working age at 9 and maximum working hours at 12), the Regulation of Child Labor Law of 1833 (which established paid inspectors to enforce the laws) and the Ten Hours Bill of 1847 (which limited working hours to 10 for children and women). https://eh.net/encyclopedia/child-labor-during-the-british-industrial-revolution/

Elizabeth was not employed in mining, although many children were. Her sister Anne was only five years old when their mother died, but possibly old enough to find some source of income. With no mother, and with her father making shoes, there would likely have been no babysitter for her. Her older brother Francis probably worked in his father's shop or entered an apprenticeship, but sadly, he died a year after his mother's death, reducing the little family to three. Elizabeth continued, "My father continued to keep house for about three years, then the home was broken up and the family divided among our relatives." By then she was about eleven.

Elizabeth wrote that she was sent to her grandparents to live. That would have been George and Mary Cooper, both 65 years old, so she did not have to leave Chesterfield. Most of her grandparents' 14 children had left home, but Elizabeth's 21 year old uncle Thomas was probably still there and also her two teenage aunts, Sarah and Martha, ages 18 and 16 when she joined them.



English towns we will mention in this story.

I do not know where Elizabeth's little sister Anne was sent when the home was "broken up." If the family was divided among relatives, Anne did not go to the Cooper grandparents with Elizabeth. Since their Hallat grandparents had both died by then, Anne, who was about eight, was likely sent to live with an aunt or uncle. One possibility is Elizabeth, one of her mother Charlotte's two younger sisters, who as a 31 year old spinster had just married 39 year old William Margerisson, a landowning farmer from Barlow. They were married in Manchester, probably because the industrial revolution had attracted them to the city, but by then William had already been drawn back to the land he owned. At their age with no children of their own, they are the most likely candidates to have taken Anne in. Anne's youngest Hallat uncle, John, is also a possibility. He and his wife Mary were living in nearby Brampton at the time with four children ages 2-9 including a girl named Mary, who was about Anne's age. It seems unlikely for Anne to have gone to live with one of her Cooper aunts. Elizabeth was still single—she married in Staffordshire in April 1833. Her aunt Barbara Cooper was not married yet either and was probably living in Manchester. No matter where she landed initially, Anne would have lived independently as soon as she could support herself, and like her sister Elizabeth and her young Cooper

aunts and uncle, she eventually ended up in Manchester. The first evidence of this could be in the 1841 census which shows a single girl named Ann Cooper,[7] a cotton weaver, who was lodging with a publican (pub owner) named John Dawett in Ashton, Salford. She is the only Ann or Anne Cooper in the Manchester area I could find who fits her description (i.e., no husband, correct age, etc.). There is no doubt that Elizabeth's sister is the Anne Cooper who on August 21, 1844, married George Holgate in Salford, a widowed gardener with two girls named Elizabeth and Sarah, six and four years old, whose mother had died in the fourth quarter of 1843. The Holgates lived in Broughton, Cheetham Hill on Coke Street, a part of Salford north of the River Irwell.

Elizabeth's wording suggests that her father also left the home when it was broken up. If so, where did he go? With so many shoemakers in town, maybe he left to make a better living. He could not have gone to his parents since Elizabeth went there. Of his many siblings in the area, all were younger and probably at least as poor as he was. His oldest brother Richard worked as a porter in Chesterfield and later farmed in Tapton. His brother George Cooper, a labourer, lived in Newbold with a wife and four children. The other siblings seem even less likely for various reasons.

With such a common name as John Cooper it is hard to trace his whereabouts during this time. One possibility is that he joined forces with 60 year old Samuel Cooper, a shoemaker in Chapel-en-le-Frith in the hills 25 miles east of Chesterfield, and his 37 year old son Samuel, also a shoemaker. The 1841 census shows that they had a shoemaker lodger named John Cooper.[8] He may have been the John Cooper shown as lodger and shoemaker living with Alfred Needham, a 31 year old "master shoemaker employing two men" in the 1851 census in Sheffield, 13 miles north of Chesterfield.[9]

But by 1855[10] John Cooper was in the Union Workhouse in Chesterfield, where in the 1861 census his name can be found among 172 people. The workhouse had 11 staff members and about 36 craftsmen who provided work for the inmates. John's name is the last of the craftsmen and the first of twelve adults listed as "adult imbeciles." His profession is given as cordwainer, but the word "imbecile" was written into the same space.[11] It appears that he was initially considered to be among the craftsmen but developed dementia after his admission and became an inmate.[12]

---

[7] She had a "y" in the column for birth in Lancashire County, but in the 1841 census I have found the county of birth column is often unreliable.

[8] Our John Cooper had a cousin named Samuel about whom little is known, but the ages of the two Samuel Coopers listed in the census do not match up well with his age.

[9] John Cooper's marital status on the census document is hard to read. It appears to be "Mar." but could also be read "Wdr." No wife is shown.

[10] In an article on the Chesterfield Workhouse, I found a document listing every adult pauper who had been in the workhouse for five years or longer. There were only 21 of that tenure including John, who had been there for six years (since 1855) for "old age"—he was 69. https://www.workhouses.org.uk/Chesterfield/ChesterfieldLT.shtml.

[11] In the 1800s the word "imbecile" was descriptive, not pejorative. From Webster's Dictionary: Idiots. —Those so defective that the mental development never exceeds that of a normal child of about two years. Imbeciles. —Those whose development is higher than that of an idiot, but whose intelligence does not exceed that of a normal child of about seven years. Morons. —Those whose mental development is above that of an imbecile but does not exceed that of a normal child of about twelve years.

[12] Workhouses were part of a centuries-long practice in England for caring for the homeless. The first poor law was proclaimed by Queen Elizabeth in 1601 in response to a famine and economic depression, giving local governments the power to build and maintain almshouses to shelter, feed, and employ those who could not be supported by their families. The first parish workhouse in Chester was erected in 1735, and in 1767 it merged with

John Cooper died on March 28, 1862, in Newbold, probably in the workhouse.

Chesterfield Workhouse viewed from the southeast about 1880.

Elizabeth wrote that when she was 13 she left her grandparents and went to live with an aunt for about two years, working as a nurse girl. This would have been around 1833, a move that made her Cooper grandparents empty nesters, since all three of their youngest children had already gone to Manchester, where they eventually married.

And it was to Manchester that Elizabeth moved. She did not record that fact in her autobiography, but a brief biography[13] states rather inaccurately:[14] "She lived with her father until they moved to Manchester, where she was cared for by her Aunt Mary Rigby." Mary J. B. Pixton's history of Elizabeth also names Aunt Mary Rigby. But this clue was accurate enough to help me figure out the true story,

---

the Ashover Union in a large former bathhouse at Ashover 12 miles away. By 1795 Chesterfield had its own workhouse for up to 50 people with eight or more beds per room filled with chaff with two sheets, a blanket, and a coverlet per person. The poor inmates spun lint and wool for in-house use. Daily breakfast was milk pottage. Dinner on odd days was bread, beef, broth, and potatoes, and on even days, pudding sauce and beer or bread cheese and beer. The Chesterfield Poor Law Union was formed in 1837 involving 33 towns and villages including Barlow and Newbold. The building in which John Cooper resided was built on Newbold Road opposite Trinity Church and included a new block for "idiots" and "imbeciles." It was finished in 1839 and planned for 300 inmates. It contained playgrounds, an infirmary, a laundry on the women's side and workshops on the men's, which included limestone breaking, oakum picking (jute fiber made for caulking), and bone grinding. It was inspected in 1866 and received an unfavorable report including that many windows did not open to provide sufficient ventilation, the infirmary was unsatisfactory and there was no proper water supply in the water-closets. Beds were so close together as to touch, the roof leaked, the chimney smoked into some wards, benches were being used instead of chairs, some wards had no proper dining tables and tablecloths were not used. Seven small children were observed eating their dinners on the floor. The nurses passed out bottles of pills rather than administering doses individually. There was only one towel per ward and no hand basins, using chamber pots for washing.

[13] Kenner, S. A., *Utah As It Is*. Salt Lake City, UT: *The Deseret News*, 1904, p. 513.

[14] Her father probably did not move with Elizabeth to Manchester and the name of her aunt was Wrigley, not Rigby.

which is that around 1833 Elizabeth moved from her grandparents' house to Salford, just across the River Irwell from Manchester, to live with her mother's youngest sister Mary Hallat, who had married a warehouse man named Joseph *Wrigley*.

Mary and Joseph Wrigley's first son Joseph had been christened at St. Mary's Church in Manchester on March 8, 1826,[15] two years before Elizabeth's mother died in Chesterfield. Samuel, their second son, was christened June 6, 1830, when Elizabeth was ten years old and still living with her father, doing her "mite" to support the family. While Elizabeth was living with her Cooper grandparents, Benjamin Wrigley was christened on May 18, 1832, so when Elizabeth arrived to work as a 13 year old "nurse girl" there were three young boys ages 1-7 for her to babysit and her aunt was expecting. Mary's fourth boy John was born May 22, 1834, but he died about six weeks later.

Both of Elizabeth's young Cooper aunts were by then living in the Manchester area, and their older sister Barbara, a 35 year old spinster, was also there. Barbara Cooper married George Taylor,[16] a warehouse man in Salford who was ten years her junior, in St. Mary's Cathedral on October 25, 1834. Maybe Taylor worked with Joseph Wrigley.

The Wrigleys lost another child while Elizabeth was working for them, Benjamin Wrigley, who died at the age of 3½ years. By strict calculation this could have been when she left Wrigleys to "go out to service." However, she said she was "*about* 13 years old" when she moved in with the family, which makes room for my theory that Elizabeth was still around for the birth of her cousin Elizabeth Wrigley the following year.

Going "out to service," means she worked as a servant for a middle or upper class family, likely as a nurse maid, since she called herself a "nurse girl" for Wrigleys. Nurse maids were house maids who often reported to a nanny, a higher ranking person responsible for supervising childcare plus education. Nurse maids did tasks like tidying the nursery, lighting the nursery fire, carrying meals, laundry, and hot water between the kitchen and the nursery. They generally wore a maid's uniform, but depending on the Wrigleys' class status, Elizabeth's earlier work for them may have been less formal.

A week after Elizabeth's 16th birthday, Sarah Cooper, Elizabeth's 24 year old aunt married Joshua Joell, a butcher, in Parish Church of Manchester. Interestingly, Joseph Wrigley signed as a witness to their marriage, which raises the possibility that the Wrigley's may have taken Sarah in too. At least it suggests that Elizabeth continued her relationship with Sarah after they moved to Manchester although they were eight years apart in age. The newlyweds moved before November that year to Wath, Yorkshire where Joshua's family lived about 27 miles north of Chesterfield, and they remained there the rest of their lives.

Mary and Joseph Wrigley's first and only girl was born June 25, 1836 and baptized three weeks later. They named her Elizabeth. They lived on Regent Road in Salford. About two years later another personal tragedy occurred in their family when eight year old Samuel died, leaving them with only two children: Joseph, age 12 and Elizabeth, 21 months. They had lost John at the age of three weeks and Benjamin the next year at age three. By then Elizabeth Cooper was no longer living with them.

---

[15] Joseph died of consumption at age 21 and was buried at Hulme in Manchester.

[16] The Taylors had three children before George died in 1843 at age 32.

Chapter 2 -- Elizabeth's Early Adult Life

When Elizabeth left the Wrigleys to work as a maid, she probably did not stray far from Salford. During her service she became acquainted with an intelligent, but illiterate[17] seventeen-year-old named Robert Pixton, who like Elizabeth, had worked since he was very young.[18] At the age of nine he worked at a rope walk,[19] then in a brick yard, and after the age of 12 at a dye works, where he was severely injured when caught up into a machine, fracturing his arm and femur. Just before they met, Robert's mother Mary died, and like Elizabeth's father, Robert's father George Pickstone[20] found that as a single man he could not handle housekeeping and sent his teenage son and two daughters out to fend for themselves, so Robert was on his own. Still working for Thomas Hargreaves at the dye works, Robert began boarding with the Joseph Bateman family, who had moved to Salford from Bolton about eight years earlier and converted to the Methodist Church. They lived on Crookell Street in the Regents Road area of Salford near the new Liverpool to Manchester Railway.[21] Bateman ran a brickyard about a half-mile from the Wrigleys.

According to Robert, he began keeping company with Elizabeth around 1836, but their relationship seems to have developed slowly--Robert wrote that he began thinking about marriage in 1839. His parents must have been ambivalent about religion, for he was belatedly christened at the age of 19[22] across the river at St. Mary's Cathedral in Manchester. I suspect this act was related to his courting of Elizabeth Cooper.

Elizabeth and Robert were married in Prestwich on May 5, 1839, about five miles from Salford, where they made their home together, but the marriage document gives Royton as their place of residence, which is an additional ten miles farther, a bit of a mystery. It must be our couple though, since the date matches the one given by Robert in his autobiography,[23] and the names of their fathers also match, as does John Cooper's trade as shoemaker. Robert's father George is listed as "labourer."

On February 8, 1840, Elizabeth bore a daughter, no doubt attended by her Aunt Mary Wrigley and possibly her sister Anne or a Cooper aunt. The baby was christened a month later with the name of Elizabeth's mother Charlotte in the parish church in Salford. The christening record gives Robert's profession as "maker up," meaning an assembler or packer of manufactured goods.[24] The term was formerly used for typesetters in printing, but by this time chiefly in textile and garment manufacture.

---

[17] Half of people in England were illiterate in 1850. Robert later taught himself to write well.

[18] Changes came in 1833 when the Factory Act was passed. The Act not only created the post of factory inspector, but also made it illegal for textile factories to employ children less than 9 years of age.

[19] A rope walk was a quarter mile long covered walkway in which strands of sisal were stretched before being twisted into rope for use in sailing ships. Young boys were employed to run the strands over the distance, producing about three miles of rope per day.

[20] There are many variant spellings of the Pixton name. I am using the spelling currently given in FamilySearch.

[21] This was the first commercial passenger railway in England. It had opened in September 1829 and ten year old Robert was probably part of the crowd who watched the first train pass by.

[22] Interestingly there were three other adults christened that same day.

[23] Church History Library, Robert Pixton Papers, MS 5474

[24] "Maker-up." *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/maker-up.

He could have been working in a warehouse such as where Joseph Wrigley was employed, or possibly for a textile maker.[25]

The Mormon missionaries had been proselyting in England for three years by then, and William Clayton had raised up a congregation of about 280 people in Manchester during the previous year. It was after the first organized company of 40 British Saints left Liverpool on the ship *Britannia* on June 6 under the direction of John Moon that the Mormons came to Robert's attention. In his autobiography he wrote:

> In the summer of 1840, I heard some of the Latter-day Saints preach, and their preaching made an impression on my mind. I found out that Joseph Bateman and wife were members of the church, so I asked them what they believed in. He said a temporal and spiritual salvation, which information set me to thinking, and I was very favorably impressed. The same summer Parley P. Pratt had a debate with Mr. Marsden, subject: the Walls of Jericho…and resulted in favor of P.P. Pratt. I heard Mr. Pratt preach about this time and I was very well pleased with his discourse.

But Robert did not become a Mormon. Not yet.

According to the census, on June 6, 1841 they were living in Salford at Corbett's Building in the Regents Road area of Salford with their one year old daughter Charlotte. Robert's profession was now given as brick maker, so he had evidently gone to work for Joseph Bateman, although no longer boarding with him. It was in this census that Anne Cooper, the cotton weaver mentioned previously, was lodging with the family of John Dawett, a publican[26] in Ashton, so if she was Elizabeth's sister, they were living only about nine miles apart.

Robert wrote further,

> I learned that Joseph Bateman's family were going to America, and I made up my mind to go with them… I spoke to my wife about it, and she was willing I should go and leave her behind until I could send for her, as we had not sufficient means for both to go. This was quite a trial for us, but I felt satisfied it would be for the best. I accordingly sent my passage money to Liverpool by J. Bateman and about the 20th (of) Sept 1841 I put my box on board the packet at new Bailey Bridge in charge of J. Bateman.[27]

Elizabeth remembered it a little differently.

> We got along very nicely until my husband got the American fever. He felt disposed to go to Canada, but being acquainted with Brother Bateman, he finally went with the Latter-day Saints.

---

[25] I found ten makers up among the fathers of 1,216 christenings in Salford over 20 years, 26 brickmakers, 31 warehousemen, and 303 people working in the textile industry (25% overall).

[26] A publican was a pub operator.

[27] The Mormons had sent out multiple emigration ships that year. The *Tyrian* was the 11th ship of Mormon emigrants from England. Two of Joseph Bateman's brothers were already in America and his father would follow in November.

On September 20 Robert left Salford for Liverpool, walking the three miles from their house to the ferry with Elizabeth accompanying him part of the way. I imagine she didn't go far, since her second baby was due. He took two different ferry boats down the River Mersey to Liverpool, where he boarded a ship full of Mormon emigrants. Elizabeth's baby, whom she named George, was born on September 23 when Robert was only two days out to sea aboard the *Tyrian*, still in sight of the Scottish coast, and little George died four days later. Elizabeth made the best of the situation, supporting herself and her daughter Charlotte as a wet nurse earning $7 per week[28] in what she described as a comfortable home. With her work as a nurse maid and moral support from Mary and Joseph Wrigley, Elizabeth and Charlotte[29] were probably much better off than her adventurous husband. Little more is known about her next two years. Presumably she spent them working at her chosen trade, a nurse maid, receiving room and board for herself and Charlotte. She must have had contact with the Mormon Branch in Manchester, for she was baptized March 11, 1843,[30] a year and a half after Robert left her.

Elizabeth and Charlotte around 1840

Exchanging letters across the Atlantic was possible in those days, but slow and unreliable. And it is possible that neither Elizabeth nor Robert was even capable of writing a letter at that time in their lives. Both had marked their marriage document with an X, and so had Robert Pilkington, their witness.[31] It is possible that their only communication during that time came in the form of a letter to Elizabeth from Brigham Young himself, hand delivered to her by a newly arrived missionary named Rueben Hedlock,[32] instructing her to board the next Mormon immigrant ship to New Orleans. Hedlock was not just a missionary—he was the newly arriving British Mission president, who arrived at Liverpool on a steamer September 30, 1843. He had arrived at Manchester by October 4 when he penned a letter to the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve announcing his arrival and his plans. He did not mention Elizabeth, but she got the message.

---

[28] This is what she reported years later. Obviously, she was paid the equivalent in English currency.

[29] This photo of Elizabeth and Charlotte came from Katie Elena Pixton Michell, daughter of Joseph Cooper Pixton and Emma Esther Ashby. It was inherited Esther Mitchell and is now in the possession of her daughter, Betty Beck.

[30] Easton-Black, Susan Ward. *Membership of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints 1830-1848.* Volume 35, p. 78.

[31] Both of them taught themselves to read and write. Robert's remarkable missionary journal gives a window into his successful efforts to improve his literacy.

[32] Hedlock was a carpenter and builder in Nauvoo and therefore may have known Nicholas Silcock. He had served as a regular elder in the British Mission 1840-41. Although he was released as mission president in 1845, he returned in 1846 as church immigration agent and was excommunicated that year for squandering £1,644 of the church's immigration funds, fleeing when Parley P. Pratt, Orson Hyde, and John Taylor arrived to investigate and never returning from England, where he died in 1869.

And she did not waste any time. Seventeen days later she and Charlotte, who was by then almost three years old, were aboard the ship *Champion,* pulling out of Liverpool harbor among a group of British converts led by Amos Fielding.[33] Elizabeth, was now 20, soon became friends with 17 year old Jane Heath Silcock, who left England with a 20 month old boy named Alma. Elizabeth later wrote "we (were) companions all the way from Liverpool" which suggests they may have first met each other aboard ship. Like Elizabeth, Jane was joining her husband, who had gone to Nauvoo ahead of her. The Silcocks were converts from Hanley, in Staffordshire.[34] Jane's husband Nicholas, who had apprenticed as a carpenter, met Parley P. Pratt on the ship to New Orleans and contracted to build Pratt's house after they arrived in Nauvoo in April of 1843.[35]

Lloyd's Civil War Map of Laconia Landing, 1863
Courtesy of Library of Congress

The trip took six weeks and three days. Elizabeth wrote, "The ship company allowed us to live and stay on board for several days, until the boat was ready which was to take us up the river." The two women must have been surprised to find a letter from Nicolas Silcock waiting for them at the port informing them that their husbands had come part way down the river to meet them and that they were to disembark from the steamboat before it got to St. Louis. They met their husbands on December 23, 1843 at Laconia Landing, Arkansas, near Island 69 in the Mississippi River, one of the most active stops for steamboats at the time.[36] The two men had been working there for a couple of months, living on one of the plantations.

They had much to catch up on. Elizabeth learned that when Robert arrived two years earlier he had traveled with Joseph Bateman's family on a steamboat which stopped 20 miles short of Nauvoo near Warsaw, Illinois due to low water in the river, where Joseph's brother Thomas picked them up in his wagon and took them to Nauvoo. After staying a day or two, Robert was taken further up the Mississippi to Thomas Bateman's home in Augusta, Iowa and spent the winter there earning his living cutting wood. On March 3, 1842, he was baptized a Mormon in the Skunk River by Thomas and confirmed by the apostle Lyman Wight, who also lived in Augusta. In the spring Robert went a few miles further north to Burlington, Iowa to work in a brickyard for $12 dollars a month and dug a mill race with

[33] On April 15th, 1841, Elder Amos Fielding had been appointed an agent of the Church to superintend the fitting out of the companies of emigrants from Liverpool and to protect them from being victimized while waiting in port to sail. He supervised the shipping of 1,991 emigrants for Nauvoo in ten companies which sailed in the *Tyrean, Chaos, Tremont, Hope, John Cummins, Hanover, Sidney, Medford, Henry,* and *Emerald.*

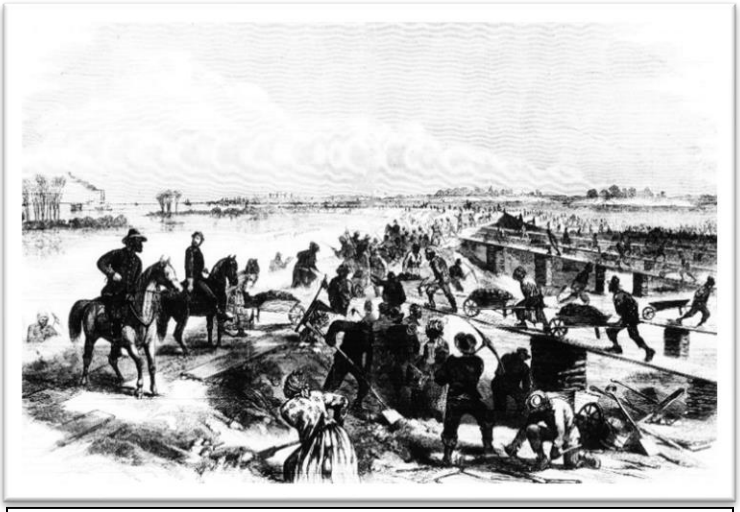
[34] Robert later married their daughter Martha Silcock in 1869 when she was 16 years old.

[35] It was a much-needed project. In his autobiography Pratt had described his previous house as "one small room we used for kitchen, parlor, bedroom, public office, etc." His family consisted then of his wife, her sister, five children, and a hired girl. He described the new house when he left Nauvoo in 1846 as "a good house, lot, and outbuildings worth $7,000. "

[36] Several of the stories of both families falsely claim that the meeting took place in New Orleans, but the first person accounts of the Pixtons and the Silcocks agree that they met at the island.

another Mormon immigrant named John Lambert and then went to Nauvoo to speak with Joseph Smith about bringing Elizabeth from Manchester. He was referred to Brigham Young, who helped to make the arrangements after taking the $15 dollars Robert had saved in Iowa. The Council voted on May 27, 1843, to pay for her immigration along with 12 other recent immigrants and their children.[37] Through the summer of 1843 Robert worked in the Nauvoo brickyard, which was located on Parley P. Pratt's land on the southeast corner of Young and Wells street just a block north of the temple, where Silcock built his two story house and store. Among those working there were Job Smith and George Bundy,[38] who would later become important characters in Elizabeth's story. Due to developments in Nauvoo, Brigham sent the letter instructing Elizabeth to come at once.

In the meantime, Robert learned of a more lucrative working opportunity. Along with Silcock he took a steamboat about 500 miles down the river to Laconia Landing in Mississippi Township, Desha County, Arkansas, where the two men had contracted to help build a levee adjacent to Island 69[39] and sent the letter to the church travel agent in New Orleans informing their wives of their whereabouts.



Building a levee in New Orleans ca. 1845
by F. H. Schell

Their main work was on the levee, a huge project. After Arkansas became a state in 1838, eastern speculators bought up most of the rich delta land around Island 69. The construction of the levee was a joint project of fourteen plantation owners who between them owned most of the 584 slaves in Mississippi Township reported in the 1850 census. Thompson Breckenridge Flournoy, age 33, was one of the owners. He listed the value of his holdings as $30,000, which converts to $1.07 million in today's dollars. It may have been Flournoy who contracted with Robert and Nicholas, not to haul dirt, but to supervise slaves, the actual builders of the Laconia Circle Levee, which encircled 18,000 acres in Desha County.

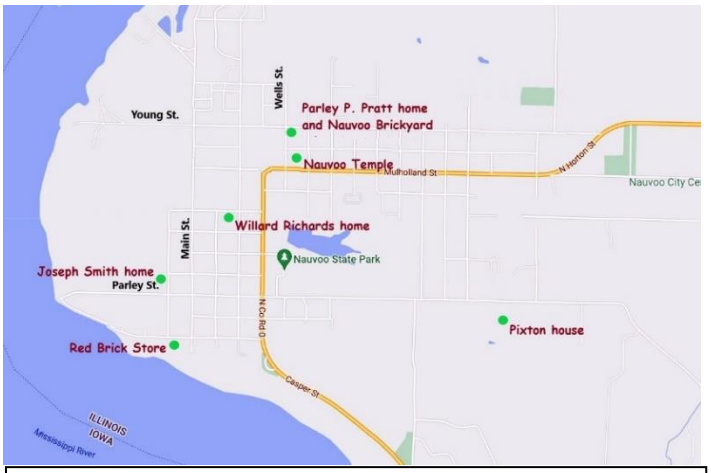
---

[37] *History*, 1838–1856, volume D-1 [1 August 1842–1 July 1843], p. 1563, The Joseph Smith Papers, accessed March 9, 2022, https://www.josephsmithpapers.org/paper-summary/history-1838-1856-volume-d-1-1-august-1842-1-july-1843/206.

[38] They were two of the former 600 members of the United Brethren, who had been converted together with their ministers by Wilford Woodruff.

[39] The river miles system was invented by Zadok Cramer in 1801 in his book *The Navigator*. There are 115 numbered islands, but with the shifts of the river many (including 69) are no longer islands. Island 69 is river mile 613, New Orleans is mile 95, so Island 69 is 518 river miles from New Orleans. The chute behind Island No. 69 was once navigable at high water stages, but it is now completely closed, and the island has become a part of the Arkansas mainland. *Historic Names and Places on the Lower Mississippi River*, Marion Bragg, Mississippi River Commission, Vicksburg, Mississippi, 1977, page 110.

The early river levees along the Mississippi consisted of three foot high earthen mounds with a road on top. The local and state governments had made it a policy that local farmers had to build their own levees on property they owned along the Mississippi. Hauling methods for bringing the dirt for the levees were primitive, typically with horse and wagon, yielding only 10-12 cubic yards per day.[40]



Nauvoo in 1844 superimposed on a modern map.

The Pixton and Silcock families stayed in Mississippi Township all winter. According to Elizabeth, the Pixtons lived in a blacksmith's shop on one of the plantations. Nicholas Silcock wrote that Robert acquired an "evil spirit" during that time, which required two priesthood blessings to cast out. When work on the levee ceased, they moved to another plantation in the township, where Robert fired a kiln of brick for the owner. The two families traveled together back to Nauvoo in the spring, stopping for a short time in St. Louis on the way. They arrived in Nauvoo May 15, 1844, where Robert again worked at the brick yard. Elizabeth wrote that they bought a half-acre[41] of land from William Blackhurst and built a brick room, their first real estate and first home. Robert worked on the Temple until the death of Joseph Smith on June 27, 1844 and was involved in militia duty during the chaos following the martyrdom. "Then (he later wrote), after things was a little settled, myself, wife, and child went down the river to finish some work that I had contracted." They were going back for another season of building the levee. This time the Silcocks did not accompany them—Nicholas had been chosen as one of 15 full-time carpenters of the Temple. One of his projects was to create a spiral staircase.

Elizabeth had become pregnant before they left Arkansas the first time. She delivered Mary Elizabeth Pixton on one of the plantations in Desha County on December 12, 1844, but the baby died a week later. They stayed in Mississippi Township all winter, and Elizabeth was sick with the ague[42] the whole time. When they returned to Nauvoo in the spring of 1845 they brought the corpse of little Mary Elizabeth back with them and buried it in the garden of their brick house.

Robert spent the summer of 1845 working in the Nauvoo brickyard and farming, but that fall it was announced that the Saints would be leaving Nauvoo and moving west, which only served to increase the agitation of the Mormon haters around Nauvoo. There was a rush to complete the temple sufficiently to permit endowments, which Robert and Elizabeth managed to obtain on February 6, 1846.[43]

---

[40] https://picryl.com/media/contrabands-building-a-levee-on-the-mississippi-river-below-baton-rouge-under, CC BY-SA 4.0., https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=74795228 .

[41] The Nauvoo property registry says it was five acres. They lived exactly one mile southeast of the temple as the crow flies, 1.3 miles to walk it, on Sidney Street.

[42] Probably malaria, which causes recurrent chills and fever.

[43] They were not sealed until later in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City on August 9, 1851.

The First Presidency was busy preparing for their own exit while finishing the endowments for as many people as possible. The plan was for the leaders of the Church to establish a road to the Missouri River for the rest to follow in the spring. Parley P. Pratt and Bishop Miller went ahead to set up the camp, and Charles Shumway ferried across the Mississippi on February 4, the first wagon to leave. Robert Pixton was smoking meat for the vanguard group to take with them when he was enlisted in an artillery unit under Captain Cott[44] assigned to protect the saints gathering for the exodus at Sugar Creek Camp about seven miles west of the river. On February 22 a blizzard left a foot of snow in Nauvoo. Three days later Charles C. Rich crossed the river on ice, and several dozen wagons crossed the ice during the next few days. By the time William Clayton crossed after waiting a week for the weather to break, Robert Pixton was at Sugar Creek with the artillery and two other military groups as security forces.

On March 1, Robert set out with the Camp of Israel on its 3 ½ month trek to the Missouri River, fording the Des Moines River at Bonaparte February 5. When they reached Richardson's Point 22 miles beyond Bonaparte they stayed until March 18, building houses and splitting rails for those who would follow. William Pitt's Nauvoo band presented concerts for pay at the schoolhouse and courthouse. The company left Richardson Point March 17, by then feeling more secure that the military protection would not be necessary. According to Willard Richard's diary that day, Hosea Stout reported that his 26 men had served honorably and would return to Nauvoo. Captain Scott of the artillery reported that his men, (Robert Pixton and five others) had honorably left for Nauvoo, and Captain Markham discharged 16 more.

The vanguard party reorganized at the Chariton River Camp from March 22 to 31. Approximately 500 wagons and 2,000 families in "The Camp of Israel" were organized that day into six companies. The pioneers camped at Locust Creek three miles above the Missouri border from April 6-13, where William Clayton composed the words to "Come, Come Ye Saints," and then turned northward toward Council Bluffs. On April 24 they halted by the Weldon Fork River's headwaters about 50 miles due south of Des Moines and called their camp Garden Grove, where they established a semi-permanent settlement for those who couldn't continue or would follow later.[45]

Robert wrote that he returned home to his house in Nauvoo and rested before setting to work on an outfit for his family to follow the vanguard group. Most of the pioneer wagons were being built in a temporary factory on the west side of the river, and he worked on that project for about a month before returning home to prepare to join the first camp. Elizabeth wrote that he returned to her in May, which

[44] This is the name that Robert gave in his autobiography, but it was likely Captain Scott, later mentioned in Willard Richards' diary.

[45] Six hundred saints wintered there the next year, of which 70 died from exposure or starvation. The Garden Grove settlement continued until 1851.

is when he sold his house and lot "for two cows and a rifle and some other things." He wrote that the income from the "other things" was turned over to Brigham Young through his secretary William Clayton to finish paying off his debt for bringing Elizabeth across the sea.[46] He sold his watch for a wagon. Neither Elizabeth nor Robert mentioned the dedication of the Nauvoo Temple in their autobiographies, but they likely attended on May 1, 1846 along with about 10,000 other people, many of whom had delayed their departure for the event. Such was the case for the Silcock family. Nicolas wrote that he continued to work on the temple until it was completed. After helping to fix several wagons to start west (possibly including the Pixtons'), he and his family went to St. Louis.

Beginning May 14, 1,350 people left Nauvoo in a week. On May 22, the *Bloomington Herald* noted that ferries were running day and night, crossing the Mississippi River at Nauvoo 35 times in 24 hours. About 7,000 to 8,000 were camped on the hills and prairie opposite Nauvoo.

I have not been able to determine just when Elizabeth and Robert hit the trail. Robert wrote that he and his family crossed the river on the church boat, which cost him the enormous sum (for that day) of $3, which he was able to pay in scrip from the church office. They stayed two or three days on the Iowa side waiting until Br. Rigby's family came along. This was probably the family of Barnett Rigby and his wife Ann and three children ages eight months through five years.[47] The Rigbys left Nauvoo on June 7 according to their family history, so if the Pixtons traveled with them they left about then.

The rate of the Nauvoo refugees' travel across Iowa varied widely. Some of the groups who left after the dedication of the temple were able to travel fast enough to catch up with Brigham Young's company before they reached the Missouri River because the vanguard party traveled slowly, having encountered winter weather, unproven trails, and having paused to develop Garden Grove and Mt. Pisgah for the benefit of later travelers. Other families took months, some over a year, making prolonged stops along the way to work for provisions or simply because they could go no farther. In general, the second wave of immigrants traveled as small companies or even as individual families.

By the time the Rigbys joined the Pixtons, the vanguard party had left Mt. Pisgah and were only a week away from Sarpie's trading post at Mosquito Creek on the east bank of the Missouri River. Over the next several weeks numerous other wagon trains joined them, forming the Grand Encampment.

The Pixtons arrived at Mt. Pisgah around the last day of June, averaging about ten miles per day. The new settlement was 190 miles west of Nauvoo. Farmland was being fenced there and developed for settlers arriving later. But when Elizabeth and Robert arrived they were no longer traveling with the Rigbys. Somewhere along the way they had fallen in with a group of British families with ties to the United Brethren including Job Smith and George Bundy with whom Robert may have worked in the

---

[46] This raises two questions. First, the Quorum of the Twelve recorded that they had voted in May 1843 to cover the cost—perhaps it was just a loan. Second, Brigham Young and William Clayton were by this time in Garden Grove, and Robert would have no chance to see them again until July when he signed up for the Mormon Battalion.

[47] Barnett Rigby came from Croston, a town close to Preston, England. His 57 year old father Edward Rigby also left Nauvoo sometime in 1846, but he did not travel with Barnett. Since Edward died October 21, 1846 on the trail to Council Bluffs, he and Barnett's brother Seth must have been in the late group of refugees who were driven forcibly out of Nauvoo in September. Barnett Rigby's sister Sarah Gabbott also died on the Mormon Trail near Chariton, Iowa nine days later, when she was run over by a wagon. His other brother John settled in Davenport, Scott County, Iowa and never came west.

Nauvoo brick yard in 1843. The group of seven families *again*[48] camped together when they arrived at Pisgah. The other men in the group were Daniel Browett, Robert Harris, Levi Roberts, John Cox, and Richard Slater.[49] All were interrelated through their wives and sisters except Slater, who had been a neighbor of Bundys and Robert Harris about seven miles west of Nauvoo. Also with them was the widow Mary Mosley, whose wagon Job Smith had driven from Nauvoo.

The group camped somewhat apart from the main gathering at Pisgah since the place was crowded with a great number of people in 205 wagons. The night after they arrived there was a heavy thunderstorm, wetting everything. The men made a big fire to dry everything out.

On July 3 Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards started for Pisgah from their camp on the Missouri River in the President's carriage and according to Richards' diary conversed about enlisting men into the Mormon Battalion until nearly midnight their first day.[50] They had with them a recruiting officer from Fort Leavenworth. The distance from the camp in Mosquito Creek to Pisgah is about 115 miles, which they were able to cover in five days in the carriage, arriving at Mt. Pisgah on July 8.

Of their visit Job Smith wrote:

> The men who with their families were camping here—quite a large number—were called together, and appeals were made by the president and others of the apostles for volunteers. It looked a very unreasonable thing to ask of people without a home or any shelter except a wagon cover… Many enlistments were made at this camp. Among the number who enlisted were nearly all of our travelling companions, namely, Robert Harris, John Cox, Levi Roberts, Daniel Browett, …Richard Slater, and Robert Pixton, all English, and all had families with one wagon and team[51] to each family.

President Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Willard Richards visited with the Saints in the morning, and most of the volunteers started for the bluffs that very day after receiving instructions from Charles C. Rich. President Young and his companions left the next day. Robert stayed in Pisgah for several days and then traveled to the Grand Encampment with the other five recruits from his group and Bundy, who I suppose drove them and their supplies and later returned with the wagon. The Battalion mustered in at sunrise on July 16 at Redemption Hill on Mosquito Creek and soon began their march at Council Point on the Missouri River.

Willard Richards recorded that on July 17 President Young proposed that men who stayed be selected to take care of the families who were left by the soldiers. George Bundy and Job Smith, the only two men remaining in Elizabeth's group, were assigned to take care of the other six families. Robert made it pretty clear in his autobiography that this had worried him. He wrote (words in parentheses are mine):

---

[48] This word was used in Job Smith's account. I have italicized it because it suggests the group had been camping together prior to arriving at Pisgah.

[49] The Slaters were not part of the United Brethren. They had left Nauvoo in February with the vanguard party but dropped out somewhere along the way before joining the group. He is probably the neighbor who sold the broken down wagon that the Bundys rehabilitated for the trip.

[50] All the details about the authorities' activities that week are from Willard Richards' journal.

[51] This is a simplification, a minimum. An inventory was taken of the resources of the soldiers in the Battalion a month into their trek, which showed, for example, that Levi Roberts had three teams, and Robert Harris and Daniel Browett had two each as well as many other animals.

> We left our families in charge of Bro. Bundy…and a boy named Job Smith (Job was 18, but very small. He wrote that he had weighed 70 lbs. in Nauvoo). This was quite an undertaking. Six out of seven to go and leave our families and stock in charge of an old man (Bundy was 58). If it had not been for the cause of God we never could have left our families on the wild prairie in an Indian country. We had a promise that they should be taken care of, but I am sorry to say many did not receive the attention they should have done.

On July 18 Brigham Young spoke to the recruits at Pigeon Creek. He said the captains should be fathers to their company, managing the affair by the power of the priesthood--all officers but three had been to the temple. There was to be no swearing. Men were instructed to take a Bible and Book of Mormon, burn up cards, and wear their temple garments. He promised that they would have no fighting to do. Robert wrote that he was assigned to mess together with Daniel Browett.[52] Bundy drove back to Mt. Pisgah, which in a wagon would have taken about ten days and set to preparing his group of women and children to move to the Missouri River. These are the women and children of Battalion volunteers who were assigned to George Bundy and Job Smith.

Elizabeth Pixton was 26 years old, the youngest of the married women, and her daughter Charlotte had turned six just two days after her parents were endowed in the unfinished temple. Elizabeth was in her 32nd week of pregnancy. The two of them were the smallest of the seven families. She possessed two oxen and one or two milk cows.[53]

Elizabeth Browett was a younger sister of Robert Harris, who married Daniel Browett when she was 21. They came to America with the Harris, Roberts, and Cox families on the ship *Echo*, and had lived in Nauvoo for five years in the third ward.[54] Elizabeth and Robert also lived in that part of Nauvoo, so they must have known each other. She was now 33 years old, but had only one child, Moroni, who was seven months old. She was traveling with her 67 year old mother-in-law Martha Pulham Browett[55] and a 37 year old "sister-wife," Harriet Barnes Browett, a widow whom Daniel had taken in polygamy in the spring of 1845, a year before they left Nauvoo. Harriet had come to America as a widow and had no children. So, in that wagon were three women and a baby.

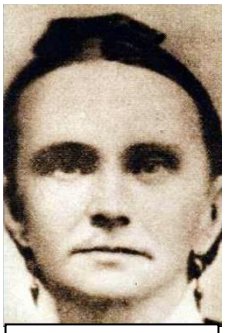
Mariah Harris

Hannah Mariah Harris (she went by Mariah) was another of Wilford Woodruff's converts with the United Brethren who came on the *Echo*. She was converted along with Robert Harris' sister Elizabeth and Daniel Browett after she heard the apostle preach, but her husband Robert resisted. He even organized a "mob" to attack Woodruff when he was preaching, but then couldn't go through with it and eventually converted. When the *Echo* was ready to sail, Brigham Young, Willard Richards and John Taylor made Browett the leader of the Mormons on the ship and Robert Harris one of his counselors. Mariah wouldn't have known it yet, but she was pregnant, having

---

[52] By the end of the journey the entire group of six ate their meals together with Robert doing the cooking.
[53] They left with two, but in the inventory of Winter Quarters of February 1847 she only had one, so she may have lost one somewhere along the way.
[54] There were no church wards in Nauvoo. This was a census area.
[55] Only two of Martha's six children immigrated to America. Her daughter Martha Rebecca was the third polygamist wife of Orson Hyde. After Hyde left her for church business in 1850 they were released from their marriage vows, and she moved in with Elizabeth at Winter Quarters.

conceived her next son around June 1, just a month before her husband left. She was 29 years old with six children under 11.


Harriet Roberts

Harriet Efford Roberts was Levi's wife. He was a basket maker by trade, and they had also sailed with the United Brethren on the *Echo*. She was 27 years old at Pisgah, the mother of four children ages under 10, two of which had been born in England. The oldest was her only boy. According to her husband's obituary, he left an "invalid" wife at Pisgah, but her health was miraculously restored while he was gone. Her own obituary stated that despite her condition she had not only freely consented to Levi's volunteering but urged him to do it.

Eliza Cox

Eliza Roberts Cox was the younger sister of Levi Roberts. Her husband John Cox was her second cousin, a laborer. They had been baptized Mormons by Daniel Browett. Like her brother, her parents had been basket makers, which may have served her well in Winter Quarters. She was 29 and had three children with her at Pisgah: Elizabeth age nine, Mary Ann, four, and Mariah, two. She had lost one before 1842, possibly having died at sea during the crossing.

Ann and Richard Slater

Ann Corbridge was the wife of Richard Slater. They were not part of the United Brethren group, but he was probably a neighbor to Robert Harris, possibly the man who sold the partial wagon that the Bundys had upgraded for the trek. It is not clear when or how the Slaters joined the group. They were said to have left Nauvoo before the others in February—maybe they were already in Pisgah when the others arrived. Ann was 34 years old and pregnant. Her four children were six months to 11 years old, the oldest a boy named Tom.

In addition to the Battalion wives, George had already taken the 34 year old widow Mary Beardmore Mosley under his wing. Her husband had died after falling from his hay wagon on September 14, 1845, just seven months before their departure. She had a four month old daughter, who had been born after her father's death, three more girls under 14, and a 3 ½ year old son. They lived seven miles from Nauvoo on a farm, so were probably close neighbors to the Gundy's and the Harris family, but were from Staffordshire, and not part of the United Brethren. He also had his adopted niece and nephew to take care of. Job Smith and his 13 year old sister Ann were the children of one of the United Brethren preachers, Thomas Price Smith,[56] who had first become a preacher in the Wesleyan Church at the age of 21. When Job was three, his parents took him to his mother's childless sister Mary Smith and her husband George Bundy, who raised him as a foster child. George Bundy had been raised by a farmer, but at age 16 became a professional house servant. When he was about 30 his parents died. He inherited their house and lived with his sisters, and he later married Job's Aunt Mary. After Job's mother died in 1835 leaving two children besides Job, his father Thomas broke away from the Wesleyans to help organize the United Brethren, and when the entire congregation was baptized as

[56] Thomas Price Smith remained in England as a traveling elder until coming to America in 1851, arriving in Utah in 1852. He eventually had six more wives and 26 children. He died in Parowan, Utah at the age of 90.

Mormons in 1840, he became president of the newly organized branch in Deerhurst, which included Job and the Bundy family. When it was time to immigrate Thomas Smith stayed behind, but funded the passage for Job and one of Job's sisters, ten year old Ann, to travel with the United Brethren immigrants. They arrived in Nauvoo in May 1843 and moved in with Daniel Browett until the spring of 1844 when they could afford a modest house and farm on a few acres of virgin forest land seven miles east of town, where several other United Brethren families had settled. That June Nauvoo erupted with the destruction of the printing press. Every able bodied man was expected to do military duty to guard the city and the prophet. Job and his uncle were enrolled, drilling with farm tools because they had no firearms. On June 22 they lined up with the militia and listened to the prophet ask if they were willing to lay down their lives for him.[57] They all shouted "yes," but he was killed five days later. After the dedication of the temple, Job Smith and the Bundys with their neighbors Robert Harris, Thomas Bloxham,[58] and the widow Mosley crossed the river, briefly found work for supplies, and later joined up with the rest of the Pisgah group.

To summarize, 18 year old Job Smith and his 58 year old uncle George Bundy were tasked with managing eight wagons carrying 37 people to the Missouri River and beyond. There were ten adult women, one of whom was 67 years old and the rest between 27 and 37—three were pregnant. There were two teenage girls, ages 13 and 15, and 23 children eleven years old and younger of which five were under two. In addition to the people, the group collectively owned nine horses, nine cows, 18 oxen, and 23 sheep which needed to be herded.[59]

This group left Mt. Pisgah around the first of August. Mariah Harris drove her own team from Pisgah, one ox and one cow that had a calf on the way, which they later butchered, valuing the meat above the cow's potential milk. Many of the women were capable of driving, but the tasks of herding, hitching up, yoking, and unyoking the animals each day and taking over the driving of all the wagons on hills and other difficult places fell upon the two men. Bundy was past his prime, and Job, though willing, was very small in stature,[60] but they managed fairly well until they approached the Missouri River about ten days later. As Job described it:

> We found a vegetation of "canebrake" ten or more feet high, almost the entire distance swampy, for ten miles to the river and very soft in places, so that progress was slow, the weather extremely hot with not a breath of wind or fresh air but what smelt strong of filthy swamp and decaying vegetation; both my uncle and myself became sick, he worse than myself.

Men were at the ferry to help them across the Missouri, swimming their animals, from where they drove 20 miles to Cutler's Park, the main camp of the Saints. By then Bundy was too sick to get out of his bed. The men were no longer taking care of the women and children—the situation had reversed. All of them lived out of their wagons for the next two months, some much longer.

---

[57] Many years later Elizabeth told the Granite Stake Relief Society that she had attended that meeting.
[58] Thomas Bloxham and his wife Dianah, another sister of Robert Harris, were apparently not camped at Pisgah with the rest of her family and went independently to Winter Quarters where Dianah died in October 1847.
[59] Mormon Battalion Company E return list, BYU Library Special Collections, https://cdm15999.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/SCMisc/id/61948
[60] When he was a boy, he was so slight that he was not required to hire out for manual labor with the rest of the poor class of children, which gave him an opportunity to attend 15 months of schooling and to do "considerable reading."

On Sunday, August 16, Brigham Young gave a short discourse at Cutler's Park to the sisters whose husbands or brothers had joined the army. "I want every family left here to feel their dependance on the brethren who have looked to them to take care of the cattle &c." Elizabeth had barely arrived in time to hear the speech and was now two weeks from her due date. The next day Brigham sent Newell Whitney to St. Louis to buy supplies for the whole camp with Battalion money. On August 27 the minutes of the St. Louis Branch noted that the members had collected and delivered $72.08 in donations for the Nauvoo refugees.

Colonel Thomas Kane, the famous friend of the Mormons, visited the Mormon encampments along the Missouri. He made the following observation of what appears to have been the temporary settlement at Cutler's Park, where he resided for two months.

Colonel Thomas Kane

> The wagons, as they arrived, took their positions along its four sides in double rows, so as to leave a roomy street or passageway between them. The tents were disposed also in rows at intervals between the wagons. The cattle were folded in high fenced yards outside; the quadrangle inside was left vacant for the sake of ventilation, and the streets covered in with leafy arbor work, and kept scrupulously clean, formed a shaded cloister walk. This was the place of exercise for slowly recovering invalids, the day-home of the infants, and the evening promenade of all. From the first foundation of the camp all its inhabitants were constantly and laboriously occupied. Many of them were highly educated mechanics and seemed only to need a day's anticipated rest to engage them at the forge, loom, or turning lathe, upon some needed chore of work. I have had a piece of cloth, the wool of which was sheared and dyed, and spun and woven during a progress of over three hundred miles.[61]

Despite the large number of Saints who had left in the spring many Mormons remained in Nauvoo. Some stayed because they were not loyal to Brigham Young, but most were just too poor to outfit themselves for the journey. The anti-Mormons had expected the exodus to be complete after the dedication of the temple in May, and they were impatient. On September 10, 1846, 800 men with six cannons began to fire on the Saints remaining in Nauvoo. After several days an agreement was reached that every Mormon would leave except five men and their families who would stay to sell the remaining property, and the fall exodus began as armed mobs drove out the remaining several hundred Saints. Minutes of the St. Louis Branch from September 21, 1846, noted that many Mormon families were hurrying down the Mississippi to St. Louis for refuge. A committee was formed there to collect more relief funds. When Brigham Young heard the news of the Nauvoo attacks he dispatched a company of men with wagons to help evacuate the poor who were huddled on the west side of the Mississippi River.

On his long military march Robert was thinking of Elizabeth and Charlotte. Five hundred miles from Ft. Leavenworth and 350 miles short of Santa Fe, he wrote to them on September 19.[62] He had heard

[61] From a lecture before the Philadelphia Historical Society in March 1850 as quoted by the *Woman's Exponent*, September 15, 1884, No. 8., p. 58.

[62] It was a long letter, probably dictated to a literate comrade, and well worth reading, and so are the others paraphrased here. See Robert's Memories section in FamilySearch.

through a letter to Browett about her sickness (the euphemism of those days for pregnancy and labor) and prayed that God would help her. He expressed disappointment not to have received a letter from her. He was hoping she would continue to unite with Br. Browett's people--Sister Browett could tell her more about his journey. There is no telling when Elizabeth received Robert's letter, but it arrived, or we would not have it.

During this period the Saints who were camping on the Nebraska side of the Missouri[63] began to move from Cutler Park to a new location a short distance to the north, which they named Winter Quarters. On September 19 Brigham and the Twelve surveyed 60 lots there. The council voted September 22 that the excavations for dwellings be dug eight feet deep on the stream bank end of each lot. Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball selected their own lots. All the entries after September 28 in Willard Richards' journal were written from Winter Quarters, and by then everyone was moving.

Elizabeth moved her wagon onto a lot located on either Block 36 or the partial Block 41 near the creek on the extreme northwest corner of the new city. She had been expecting to go into labor any time, and it happened on her fifth day in Winter Quarters, alone except for her little girl Charlotte in the wagon box. She named the infant Robert Helaman Pixton. Brother Brigham blessed him.

Robert wrote to Elizabeth again on October 14. They had covered 350 more miles and he was waiting for his pay to send back to her. He wrote that the farther he traveled the more he felt his affection for her. He again advised her to stay close to the Browett women, hoping they would bless her as Browett had blessed him. He wrote again on October 17 to let her know that he had received $10.20, which he sent to the Church on her behalf, so she should not be backward in letting her case be known to them. She was to get a letter written to him as soon as she received this one. He continued,

> There is one thing that is needful and that is six new boxes to your wagon wheels—two of them is likely to be good but the others are not to be depended on for a journey (He had no idea that she would not be in Utah for another two years.) And I hope your cow is a benefit to you now.

The pioneers at Winter Quarters ran their cattle in a single herd, and the Indians were reportedly killing 2-3 oxen per day. On October 15, President Young had 14 head missing and Dr. Richards about 30 oxen and cows. It was decided to send all the oxen and cattle to a place several miles up the river called Rush Bottoms.

The river was getting very low, and it was difficult to get any boating up the Missouri from St. Louis, so they sent 35 men driving teams overland to St. Louis for goods, a distance of 430 miles. Porter Rockwell began cutting logs for Dr. Richards, who was planning a large octagonal house for the three wives he had brought from Nauvoo.[64] Everyone who could afford one was busy trying to build a house, the rest constructing dugouts.

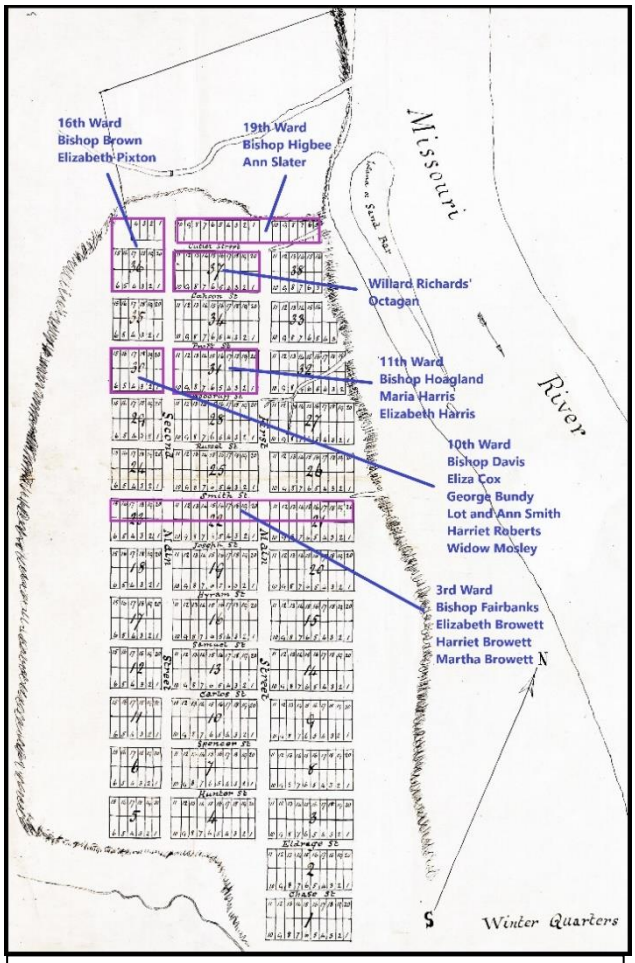
---

[63] It is important to point out that there were at least as many Mormons inhabiting the Iowa side of the river as settled in Winter Quarters, living in various locations among the remaining Pottawattamie Indians during the winter of 1846-47 in shacks of cottonwood, caves in the bluffs, log cabins in the groves and glens--wherever there was shelter, fuel, and water.

[64] These were Sarah (Sally) Longstroth, his niece Amelia Pierson, and the nurse Susannah Lee Liptrott. His first wife, Jennetta Richards, had died a year earlier in Nauvoo. Nanny Longstroth had fled Nauvoo in September with her parents to St. Louis, where her parents offered a temporary home to Willard's wives Jane Hall and Ann

On November 14 Sarah Cox was born at Winter Quarters before her mother's cabin was built, so Eliza must also have delivered her baby in a wagon. The child lived long enough to be counted in the Iowa census, which was enumerated September 23, 1850, but not long after that.

On November 18, 1846, Elizabeth's baby Helaman died at the age of one month and 15 days[65] and was "put away with about five hundred more who were buried that Winter Quarters that season" as Elizabeth put it. He was her third consecutive child to die as a newborn. A week later Moroni Browett died. He was the only child that Elizabeth and Daniel ever had, just a year old.



This map was drawn by William Clayton with my notes added in blue.

The next day the first bishop's reports were summarized into a single document by Willard Richards for the ten wards set up initially (only seven had reported). It only counted sick and well men and the number of remaining teams, which had not yet been fully pooled with the church herd. There were 156 men of which 20 were sick and nine ox teams. The same day the high council recommended a plan for expanding the previously existing ten Winter Quarters wards into 22 and nominated the bishops and ward boundaries.[66] Elizabeth Pixton ended up in the 16th Ward with Benjamin Brown as her bishop. Eliza Cox, Harriet Roberts, Mary "the widow" Mosley, and George Bundy were all in the 10th Ward on block thirty headed by Isaac Davis and later, Daniel Carn. The Browett women--Daniel's 67 year old mother Martha, his wife Elizabeth and second wife Harriet Clifford--were in Bishop David Fairbanks' 3rd Ward, although Elizabeth Browett also shows on the records of Bishop Abraham Hoagland[67] in the 11th Ward on block 31 along with her sister-in-law Hannah Mariah Harris, who lived in a log house that a brother in the ward had built for her and her six children. Ann Corbridge Slater was in John Higbee's 19th Ward on block 39. After living in their

---

Braddock. Jacob Peart hosted Mary Thompson and Ann Fox. He would marry Susanna Bayliss a year later at Winter Quarters.

[65] He was on the first page of the sexton's report which began November 16, the sixth name of eight on the page covering five days. Four were adults. By December there had been 286 deaths, 82.1 per thousand. A third of the deaths were children under two, giving a birth mortality of 35.5%. Today in the worst third world countries the death rate is less than 50 per thousand. According to data derived from the 1850 Utah Census, the rate that year was 21 per thousand. Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, *Eliza and Her Sisters*, 1991, p. 90.

[66] Church History Library LR 6359 25.

[67] Abraham Hoagland was the husband of Agnes Taylor, daughter of the apostle John Taylor and the father of Elizabeth, who later married George Q. Cannon.

wagon for a time all were able to get a cabin. The report showed that Ann was 35 years old with 5 children 1-12 (Rachael, Margaret, Priscilla, Mary Ann, and Thomas) one wagon, one yoke oxen, one plow. It did not mention that she was in the late stage of another pregnancy.

There were only three healthy men in Bishop Brown's ward. This story from Brown's autobiography paints a picture of the situation for everyone that winter:

> The city was laid out in wards, over each of which a bishop was appointed. One of these wards was committed to me, and this of course entailed upon me the care of the poor--no trifling matter under such circumstances. It would take no small space to describe all the expedients to which I was often driven in fulfillment of this duty, for the little stock I had of my own was soon gone, and still the poor had not done eating. What was to be done? I went to President Young, and very pathetically told him that all my grain was gone, and I had not the first shilling in my possession with which to get any more grain. All the consolation I got from him was some instruction to "feed them well, and take care they have enough to eat," and it would not do for a Saint to say he could not. So, I had to scheme. I borrowed ten dollars from a sister who possessed a small store (of money). I then crossed the Missouri River and laid the money out in meal and some meat. But when this was gone I had to borrow of someone else to pay her, and then of someone else to pay him. I borrowed until I made my debt up to fifty dollars, and no more chance of payment appeared than at the first. Who would not have been a bishop then? Fortunately, just at this juncture, the lost cattle of one who had died in my ward came into my hands, and I sold them for fifty dollars. I paid my debt, and I was just right, and ready to commence borrowing again, with a clear conscience… After a time, the blackleg scurvy, one of the diseases by which we were afflicted, began to cease, for we had obtained vegetables from Missouri, and as the spring came on we procured fresh fish, which further varied our diet. (after the pioneers left in 1847) I and many others left our families, went down into Missouri, and hired ourselves out to obtain means to buy teams, clothes, flour, etc., so that we might follow the pioneers' camp when the time arrived.

In December 1846 Eliza Cox hired a man named Warner Porter to build her a small cabin. It was made 10 feet square of split logs with a sod chimney and fireplace and a dirt covered roof. Porter also built one for Harriet Roberts—the cabins cost $12 each. Eliza Cox shared hers with the Bundys, which amounted to nine occupants, 11 square feet per person. Some must have slept in their wagons, or their bodies would have covered the entire floor at night. All of them were sick except Mary Bundy and Job's sister Ann Smith. They killed their starving cow to eat, and then ran out of all food but coarse corn meal. The bishops had little to give people. Job Smith and George Bundy became bed ridden and crippled. Job was helped by a blessing from the patriarch John Smith, the Prophet's uncle. The Apostle George A. Smith and his wife Bathsheba, Daniel Russel, and others visited them.

The Cox and Roberts groups and many others made willow baskets that winter to sell in Missouri for food. Job recovered his health sufficiently to travel to Missouri with John Gailey, another of the former United Brethren, to trade baskets for food including potatoes which they found instantly relieved scurvy.

Bishop Abraham O. Smoot's tithing records from December 1846 through 1847 show dozens of entries for wood, salt, meal, flour, meat, etc. from tithing funds[68] for Eliza Cox and George Bundy, probably

[68] It appears that tithing money at that time was primarily used to aid the poor.

more than for any other one family in his record. And they were not even living in his 15th Ward. It is pretty clear that tithing was not always spent within the ward in which it was donated. The same was true for Bishop Hoagland. He contributed significantly to Harriet Roberts, Eliza Cox, and the widow Mosley, who were not in his 11th, but in the 10th Ward. The wards of Bishops Smoot and Hoagland housed many luminaries such as Wilford Woodruff, George Cannon, Archibald Gardner, Truman Angell, and W.W. Phelps, so it appears the wealthier wards supported the poor ones.

Tithing records can be found for only a few of the wards, but I found no evidence in them for support of Elizabeth and Charlotte Pixton. Perhaps they were adequately supplied. Or perhaps they received support outside the tithing system such as from Robert's pay or a wealthier neighbor.

In December Willard Richards moved his possessions from his wagon into his octagonal house. He had enlisted the Twelve to work with him on covering it and used the dirt dug from his well to make the roof and floor. The high council began meeting there on December 13. On the 18th he wrote that he had slept in his own house (although without a bedstead) for the first time since leaving Nauvoo 11 months earlier. On Sunday December 20 the Saints assembled at the stand at the ring of a bell and were addressed by President Young for the space of two hours. The council met in Richards' house that evening. Doctor Richards finished the cupola of his octagon and was also putting on the dirt on the passages and his office. He recorded that the municipal high council met there.[69]

That month a more informative and standardized report was adopted for the bishops. It shows that there were 3,483 people at Winter Quarters of whom 334 were sick. Of the men, only 502 were well and 117 were sick. Also listed were 138 "absent" men, probably those on missions or in the army. There were 621 households of which 538 were living in cabins averaging 14 x 12.5 feet in size. The other 83 were in sod houses. I don't know how they classified Elizabeth's house--she wrote that she lived the entire year out of her wagon.

I have to admit that I was skeptical that anyone could survive such a winter in a wagon until I read the following vivid description that Willard Richards' sister Rhoda wrote while she lived out of her wagon the following winter in Salt Lake City. To imagine what Elizabeth's life was like, just substitute Charlotte's name for Levi.

> I live in the (wagon) I came in, my things are all in it, piled to the ridge post, trunks, boxes, bags under the bed. That is one half of the wagon. My bedstead is lying on the projection… I have a good bed and down, and everything as comfortable as anyone. I make my bed for my boy and I, and the remainder of the room I pile mountain high. Now I will come down into the room that I live in, sitting back near the bed writing upon my low red chest… Over that stands my cupboard on the projection. On the top I set a pan of milk…then a large earthen butter dish with a cover, then a band box and other small boxes. All reach to the roof. The same side of the projection, first pail of cream, pail of flour, a jar of yeast, tin churn, mother's foot stove, etc., etc. Over are many things hung such as grater, skimmer, dipper, etc. In the other side, iron mortars, flat irons, candle box, candle sticks, lamp, water pail… At the end stands my cook stove with a good oven and a large copper tea kettle that will hold twelve pails of water, seldom cold, a place between

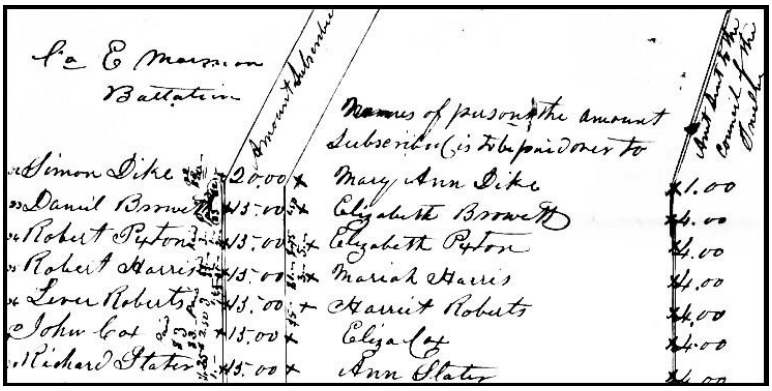
[69] The names octagon, tabernacle, windmill, potato heap, and apple heap were occasionally applied to Dr. Richards' house.

> the end and stove for the wood. By the stove hearth there is just room for Levi Willard to run and look out when the curtain is up. His dress has caught fire many a time. I have to watch him like a cat watching a mouse. My dinner pot stands between the stove and chest, frying pan on the other side, brass pail hangs up over the stove. Our parlor, dining room, and kitchen are all comprised in one, a little more than a yard square. I have a low rocking chair. Levi has a chair and a box one can be seated on. In my chest I keep my pies, cakes, and all cheese, as I have no cellar. My house stands on wheels. We have some blows that rock it like a cradle.

On January 20, 1847, a temperature of -13 degrees was recorded at Winter Quarters and five days later Willard Richards' second wife, Sarah Longstroth Richards, bore her first child, Willard Brigham, attended by her sister-wife Susannah Liptrott.

Brigham Young was already making advance preparations for the first party to cross the Rocky Mountains on January 19 when the meeting of the captains of the 100's and 50's of the first company met in the council house. That evening the choir met at the council house and there was vocal and instrumental music and dancing. The captains met again February 12.

The High Council generated a report by ward of all the widows and wives of battalion members to inventory their resources. Elizabeth's 16th Ward had six widows and four battalion wives. All of the women who had come with Elizabeth from Pisgah possessed a wagon and at least one yoke of oxen and a cow, although the animals were kept in the church herd several miles north of the camp. George Bundy's family was included on the list of widows, the only household in the report headed by an adult male, probably because of his sickly condition. All the Cox and Bundy family members in the cabin were listed as "sick" although his niece Ann was well enough to take care of the rest of them. There was a total of 47 soldiers' wives, 72 widows, and 13 others, listing 132 total in the report. Although the Church had confiscated all the advance pay of the battalion, the men on the march had the option of having a portion of their monthly pay sent back to the Church to be distributed to their wives. Most opted to send between $1 and $6. In his journal William Clayton, the church secretary, recorded he had "spent nearly the whole day at the store mostly paying out money to the soldiers' wives." Here is a portion of one the of the Battalion's pay register reports. It appears that the Pisgah men each received $15 and sent $4.00.



In February, two more women in Elizabeth's Pisgah group delivered babies. Robert Harris, Jr. was born to Mariah. He would die July 30 at the age of five months. Ann Slater also had her baby Enoch around that time. He lived less than a year.[70]

The appointed leaders of the vanguard group of pioneers continued to meet regularly to organize and equip themselves for the crossing. The Saints in St. Louis were also actively involved in the plans

[70] I have no sources for this. He is listed in FamilySearch as born and dying in 1847.

through letters and frequent visits by the brethren asking them to commit money and supplies as well as able men with teams to leave their families behind and accompany the pioneers to the mountains. J. A. Stratton, the St. Louis branch president, set an example by resigning his position and joining the pioneers in March. His successor, President Nathaniel H. Felt, wrote from St. Louis to Brigham Young on March 28 that nine or ten families had recently left his branch for Council Bluffs, and he expected 150 more to leave that spring. Orson Hyde responded to congratulate the St. Louis Saints for $2,000 in support of the exodus.

Finally on April 14 Brigham Young and the rest of the vanguard pioneer party departed Winter Quarters, leaving their families behind. None of Elizabeth's Pisgah group left in the initial party—of the 143 pioneers in the initial company there were only three women and two children.

Four more groups of pioneers left that summer with more of a balance between men and women. Three companies left about a month after Brigham's group, led by Daniel Spencer, Edward Hunger, and Jedediah M. Grant, with two of Elizabeth Pixton's Mt. Pisgah women among them. Hoping to meet her husband Daniel, Elizabeth Harris Browett joined the Spencer party and arrived September 25, 1847. She moved into the adobe fort with George Gates and his wife, who had traveled with her in Asa Barton's ten, but her sister-wife Harriet remained at Winter Quarters with their mother-in-law Martha Browett. Job Smith's sister, Ann Smith who was by then 14 years old, traveled with Brigham's brother, John Young, in the Jedediah Grant party to assist John's second wife Mary Ann. The fifth group, led by Abraham O. Smoot, left two days after that, followed closely by Charles C. Rich.

The exodus helped to alleviate the shortage of housing at Winter Quarters although many of the 1,631 people who left that year had been living east of the Missouri River in Iowa or had come up the river from Missouri, especially from St. Louis. The three remaining Bundys moved out of Eliza Cox' cabin into one vacated by a brother Corbet. Eliza and her children moved to better lodging as well according to her biography.

By July 1847 Elizabeth and Charlotte had their fill of Winter Quarters. Elizabeth described her year there in four terse sentences:

> We passed the winter there. We could scarcely say we lived. In the month of July 1847, I went down to St. Louis to earn sufficient money for an outfit to take me to Salt Lake. I left my wagon in charge of my friends.

Around the time Elizabeth left, Robert and the rest of the battalion members finished their duty and were discharged July 16 at Fort Moore in Los Angeles. Eighty of them reenlisted, but Robert and his Pisgah friends bought horses from the army to pack and ride and travelled the 800 miles to Sacramento. At Sutter's Fort they got fresh provisions for the trip back to meet their families and got as far as Donner's Pass when they met Captain Brown, who had left the Battalion at Santa Fe with the sick detachment and entered the Valley with Brigham Young's vanguard group. Brown had been sent to tell them to stay another year in California because the Saints, who had just reached the valley, were not in a position to support them. Some went on anyway, but Robert Pixton, Daniel Browett, Richard Slater, and John Cox went back to Sacramento[71] to work for Sutter until the following spring, where Browett

[71] Robert's autobiography included Levi Roberts in that group, but Levi went on with Robert Harris according to the Pioneer Database.

got a job working for the millwright. Robert and two others got sick with bilious fever. He wrote that only the thoughts of his wife and family kept him alive, but he recovered and worked there all winter. In May 1848 Robert and some of the brethren went up the Truckee River to find a route over the Sierras, but the snow was so deep they had to return to Mormon Island near Sutter's Mill and got some gold.

Robert Harris and Levi Roberts had left California a year earlier. They were part of the group of about 100 former Battalion men led by Levi Hancock and Jefferson Hunt, who had proceeded to the Valley in 1847 despite Captain Brown's instructions. When they reached the Valley on October 16, Brigham Young was no longer there. He was on his way back to Winter Quarters with Heber C. Kimball and the rest of the Twelve to organize a larger group for the following season. Brigham made his return trip in 67 days.

Not finding their wives in Salt Lake as hoped, Roberts[72] and Harris pushed on with 30 others to Winter Quarters and nearly died of starvation on the way, arriving on Christmas Day, 1847. Job Smith witnessed their arrival, writing that the men returned so emaciated they could hardly be recognized. Robert wrote that he sent a "smile to his wife with Harris, which she got," but if so, it must have been a lot later, for she was in St. Louis when Harris arrived at Winter Quarters and did not likely see him until the following summer.

Elizabeth wrote absolutely nothing about her time in St. Louis. I imagine that she traveled the 440 miles by riverboat, although some traveled over land. There was a strong connection between the Mormons at Winter Quarters and St. Louis for trade and Church business. I wonder what kind of work Elizabeth found there—maybe childcare, her trade in England. The Silcocks were living in St. Louis with Alma, who was by then five. Jane, who had ague, had to stay in a part of the city that was away from the river, and supported the family by sewing. Nicholas worked as a boat carpenter, traveling the Mississippi between St. Louis and New Orleans. They had lost a daughter at the age of one in August 1846, and now Jane was seven months pregnant, so Elizabeth was in St. Louis when Barbara Ann Silcock was born on September 6, 1847.[73] Maybe that factored into her decision to go downriver in the first place.

The day after Christmas, Orson Hyde was in St. Louis asking for funds to support the second Brigham Young Company which was being planned for the spring of 1848. He said the important thing was to get Brigham, Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards located with their families. "Get the 'head' (of the Church) safe, and we are safe, even if we die." Seventy-seven people contributed, including a small donation from the Longstroths, the parents of two of Willard Richards' wives, with whom Elizabeth may also have had a connection, since she later traveled with them. Elizabeth and the Silcocks were not on the list of donors.

On April 11, 1848, Elizabeth and Charlotte set out for Council Bluffs with 106 St. Louis Saints on the Missouri River steamer *Mandan*. The passenger list included Stephen and Ann Longstroth with their children Nanny, George, Ann, and William, ages 19,17, ten, and seven. Also aboard were Mathias Cowley, Erastus Snow, and Ezra T. Benson, and Amasa Lyman, all planning to join Brigham Young's second trip to the mountains. About five days out of St. Louis, the boat hit a rock and had to go ashore near Covington, Missouri, where the passengers camped for two weeks until the repaired boat could

[72] Levi Roberts appeared before a justice of the peace in Atchison County, Missouri on January 13, 1848, to apply for bounty land. National Archives, https://catalog.archives.gov/id/76038086 .
[73] Barbara Ann died in April 1849, probably of cholera which was epidemic in St. Louis.

return and deliver them successfully to Winter Quarters. Mathias Cowley wrote that they camped about a month, and it may have seemed that long, but they arrived at Winter Quarters on May 1. Happily, Elizabeth found that her friends at Winter Quarters had kept her wagon and oxen intact for her use during the crossing of the plains.

Taking all the companies together, the 1848 Brigham Young wagon train may have been the biggest single movement of immigrants in the history of the United States, involving 2,408 souls if the Willard Richards Company is included, which left about a month after the initial group. Of these, 1,102 were women. The median age was 17-18. The story is amply documented in trail diaries such as the daily entries of Thomas Bullock,[74] Brigham Young's secretary, but relatively few details are known about Elizabeth Pixton's experience.

After taking a week to get all the wagons across the Elkhorn River, Brigham Young's company set out June 5. By July 1 they had gone 302 miles, averaging about 12 miles per day.

Elizabeth wrote that she was in Brigham Young's hundred,[75] and that she drove her own team.[76] The wagon ahead of her was driven by Horace Eldredge and the one behind by 17 year old William Van Dyke, who had been hired by Brigham Young to drive a load of corn for him as far as the Sweetwater River in Wyoming near Martin's Cove.[77] She had trouble herding her cows and got help from Lyman Hinman, who with his wife Aurelia was traveling in Elizabeth's company with two married daughters and three sons ages 8-17, who were probably the ones actually doing Elizabeth's herding. A story written 56 years later claimed that "Mrs. Pixton yoked and unyoked her own ox team all the way to Salt Lake Valley, traveling as one of five wagons in President Young's company with only her five year old girl as a wagon companion."[78] That can at best be only partly true since Charlotte was eight years old. The widow with whom she had camped at Pisgah, Mary Beardmore Mosley, and her six children were also in Brigham's hundred. He seems to have taken women traveling without a husband under his wing. George and Mary Bundy were also in the group, driving a unique wagon they had fashioned in Nauvoo with virtually no iron parts, which fell apart just as they arrived in the Valley.[79] Their adopted nephew Job Smith was assigned to drive one of Brigham Young's wagons, but partway through the journey was re-assigned to drive for Thomas Bullock, Brigham's secretary.

With Elizabeth Pixton and the Bundys on the wagon train, only four of the ten Pisgah women remained in Winter Quarters awaiting their Mormon Battalion men: Eliza Cox, Ann Slater, and Martha and Harriet Browett who were Daniel Browett's mother and second wife. Elizabeth Browett and Ann Smith had

---

[74] Find Bullock's 1848 journal here.
[75] The pioneer companies were subdivided into "tens," "fifties," and "hundreds."
[76] She and Elizabeth Browett were the only women of the Pisgah group to reach the Valley without their husbands.
[77] It is probably at this time that William Van Dyke first became acquainted with Charlotte Pixton, whom he later married. He did not arrive with the Pixtons at Salt Lake because he returned from Sweetwater to the Bluffs, from where in 1849 he drove a freight wagon in the Samuel Gulley/Orson Spencer Company for Livingston and Kinkead, two gentile merchants in Salt Lake City.
[78] Kenner, S. A. *Utah As It Is*. Salt Lake City. Deseret News, 1904, p. 513.
[79] A model of the wagon fashioned by Job Smith is in the possession of the Church History Library.

been in the Valley for nearly a year. Mariah Harris[80] and Harriet Roberts[81] had greeted their husbands at Winter Quarters the previous Christmas.

While Elizabeth and Charlotte were still preparing to join the Brigham Young Company, Robert Pixton was headed to the Valley from the opposite direction. And during the 111 days of her crossing, there was a lot of drama among all the members of her Pisgah group.

The next of the Pisgah group men to return was Richard Slater. He was one of four battalion members[82] who had been employed as express riders to carry a special edition of the newspaper *California Star* to the East announcing the discovery of gold. The riders reportedly left San Francisco on April 1, probably struggling mightily to get through Donner's Pass, since it was July 9 before they had reached the Salt Lake Valley. They continued east on the pioneer trail, meeting Brigham Young's company July 27 near La Bonte Creek, Wyoming according to Thomas Bullock's journal. Bullock recorded their news that the Mormon settlers had been driven from the San Joaquin Valley by mosquitos but were doing well in San Francisco. He made no mention of the gold. Elizabeth Pixton would have had a chance to speak with Slater and receive welcome news of Robert. After delivering the news he had been paid to carry, Slater returned to his wife sometime before January 19, 1849[83] in time to conceive twins who were born at Kanesville on October 12, 1849.[84]

Robert Pixton, John Cox, and Daniel Browett had tried to leave Sutter's Mill in May 1848 but were turned back by mountain snow. On June 22 they tried again in a group of battalion veterans, electing Daniel Browett as president of their company.[85] Browett and two other men named Henderson Cox and Ezra Allen went ahead to scout the trail with a horse and pack mule each. When they didn't come back, the group set out after them and found their bodies on July 19 in a shallow grave riddled with arrows.[86] Grieving the loss of Daniel Browett, Robert Pixton and John Cox traveled with the company the rest of the way to the Valley without further significant problems, the group fragmenting into smaller parties as they crossed the desert.

Word of Browett's death probably first reached his widow Elizabeth Browett[87] around September 6 when the first of his company including John Cox arrived in Salt Lake City. Regular messages were being sent east from the Valley, and the news would have quickly reached the Brigham Young Company, which was by that time at Big Sandy, about 250 miles east of Salt Lake Valley, eight days away by horse rider. At the soonest, the word could not have arrived at Winter Quarters before mid-October by express

---

[80] The Harris family moved to Council Point when the lease of the Omaha tribal land expired and Winter Quarters shut down in late 1848, and after two years they traveled to Utah together in 1850 bringing along Harriett Browett, Daniel's second wife. Sadly, Harriet died on the trail.

[81] Levi and Harriet Roberts arrived in Deseret October 4, 1850.

[82] According to Thomas Bullock the other three men were William Hawk, Nathan Hawk, and Sandford Jacobs.

[83] Slater met Brigham Young's Company about 500 miles out of Salt Lake City, so Slater was making about 30 miles per day. At that rate he could have met his wife at Winter Quarters or Kanesville around August 28, 1848.

[84] The Slaters lived on the Missouri River until 1852, when they crossed the plains in the Howell company.

[85] This group was later known as the Jonathan H. Holmes/Samuel Thompson Company.

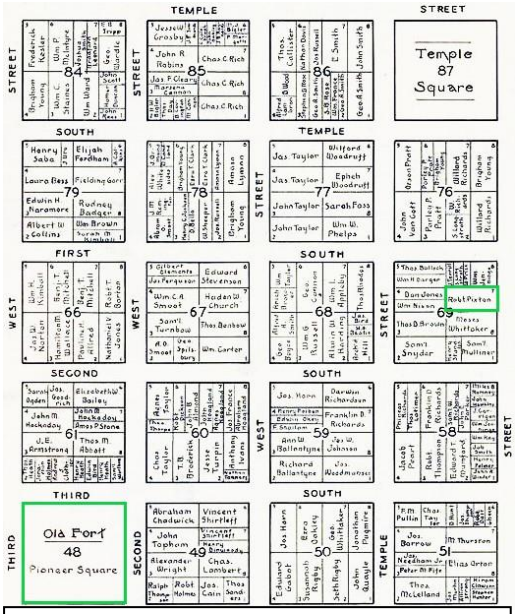
[86] They named the place Tragedy Spring and carved the names of the victims into a tree on the spot. The original fir trunk was taken to Sutter's Fort in 1931 and is now located in Marshall Gold Discovery Park, Coloma, El Dorado, California.

[87] Elizabeth Browett remained in Salt Lake City until her brother Robert Harris arrived September 12, 1850. She moved with his family to Kaysville in the spring of 1851.

rider. There the tragic news reached Browett's mother Martha[88] and his second wife Harriet before John Cox arrived home, and John's wife Eliza received it too. Unfortunately, John Cox had been confounded with Henderson Cox, one of the other victims, and Eliza Cox was told incorrectly that her husband had died, which sent her into "hysterical fits." John must have appeared shortly thereafter, certainly before Christmas, for he applied with a justice of the peace in Atchison County Missouri for a veteran's land bounty on December 28, 1848. John and Eliza moved back to Mt. Pisgah, where their daughter Eliza Jane was born November 12, 1850. They trekked to Utah between 1851 and 1853, but Eliza suffered from her shock for the rest of her life.

Elizabeth camped with Brigham Young's company at Blacks Fork on September 11, Echo Creek on September 16, and on September 22 she drove her own wagon into the Salt Lake Valley and camped in it at the Old Fort. The population of the Valley roughly doubled in the next month as the companies from Winter Quarters streamed in. On September 26, Robert's party of battalion veterans camped at Haight's Creek, 10 miles from Elizabeth and Charlotte. The next day they entered Salt Lake City. Having heard of his coming, Elizabeth came out to meet him near the warm springs about two miles from the fort. Robert wrote that they had been separated for two years, two months, and 11 days.

The Willard Richards Company arrived in several groups between October 10 and 19. According to Ellen Partington, his adopted daughter, the 21 members of Willard Richards' family drove straight through the Old Fort without stopping, and right up to the northeast corner of the block south of Temple Square, which had been assigned the previous year to Willard as his "inheritance,"[89] where they lived in their wagons for the entire winter.



Portion of early map showing Old Fort and Pixton Lot on Block 69

Robert wrote,

> Bro. Willard Richards sent for me in a short time after I arrived at home. I went to see him, and we had a little talk, and he afterwards gave a city lot on the street now called East Temple St. (current Main St.) I built a small adobe house on it and on the 16th (of) Dec 1848 we removed into it. It was not plastered all winter because of the hard frost.

They lived in the fort for two months while Robert, who of course was a brickmaker, made the adobe bricks and assembled them into a single room, which is said to have been the first house erected on Main Street.[90] While still living in the fort, Charlotte, then eight years and nine months old, was re-baptized[91] by Curtis

[88] Martha Pulham Browett moved in with her daughter Martha, who was a wife of Orson Spencer, in Kanesville, Iowa. The two traveled together to Utah in 1852.

[89] Shortly after the arrival of the Vanguard group of pioneers in 1847 the land was surveyed and divided into city blocks of 10 acres divided into 1.25 acre lots, which were distributed as "inheritances" with the understanding that they were to be used for home or business buildings only and not to be sold or otherwise disposed of for pecuniary profit. Each lot owner was entitled to a farm lot of five, 10, or 20 acres south of town.

[90] *Salt Lake Daily Herald*, April 24, 1883.

E. Bolton and confirmed by William W. Major. They moved into their house soon afterwards. The next morning a great snow fell, and Robert wrote that it was 16 weeks before the ground was clear again.

I have wondered how Robert and Elizabeth Pixton happened to receive one of the prime properties in all of Deseret. One of Elizabeth's biographers wrote that it was a gift of gratitude for Elizabeth's help during a severe spell of sickness in the Willard Richards family.[92] When could that have occurred? Unfortunately, Richards does not mention Elizabeth in his voluminous journal, nor does his excellent biographer Claire Noall,[93] but I will speculate.

If true, it did not likely happen before Elizabeth came to America. Willard left England with his young wife Jennetta and her 18 month old son Heber on April 21, 1841, five months before Elizabeth and Charlotte walked with Robert to the ferry landing in Salford. The Pixtons were not yet Mormons, but there are several times later when the Pixton and Richards families intersected.

Willard and Jennetta Richards with Heber

Willard left his wife and child with relatives in Massachusetts for a year and a half before bringing them to Nauvoo. Elizabeth Pixton was still in England and Robert was working at the Nauvoo brick yard when Jennetta Richards and Heber, who was then two years old, moved to Nauvoo in November 1842. When the Pixtons returned to Nauvoo from their first stint in Arkansas at Island 69, Heber was three and a half and Jennetta had an eight month old baby named Rhoda Ann. As an upper middle class Englishwoman, Jennetta might have desired the help of a nursemaid, but Elizabeth could not have worked there very long, since by fall the Pixtons had gone down the river for another winter at Island 69, where Elizabeth lost her infant, Mary Elizabeth.

If Elizabeth assisted the Richards family when she returned to Nauvoo with Robert, it was likely in the spring of 1845. On May 20 Jennetta became sick with "pleurisy." She was so ill that Willard stayed with her full time from May 24 until about June 9. Susannah Lee Liptrott,[94] a trained nurse whom the Richards had known in England, moved into the house to help her. On July 6, Willard wrote, "Jennetta gave certain signs of being with child, and child alive. We feel encouraged." It appears that she was in the middle of another pregnancy and suffering from more than pleurisy, perhaps a pulmonary embolism. The improvement did not last. On July 9 Jennetta died and was buried on their lot. Heber was nearly five and Rhoda Ann was 22 months. This called for a trained nursemaid and could have been when Elizabeth made her contribution. Her own daughter Charlotte was five then.

There were other possible babysitters. A woman named Mary Benson Kay, one of Jennetta's best friends, is known to have taken care of Heber and Rhoda Ann at times. Heber recalled as an adult that it was Mrs. Bennett who told him the most he knew about his mother. However, the Kays lived "on the

---

[91] Charlotte's original baptism must have taken place in St. Louis earlier that year.

[92] Mary J. B. Pixton, *History of Elizabeth Cooper Pixton*, Family Search, Memories KWV3-GVF. Professor Paul Pixton has questioned the veracity of this story, pointing out that choice "inheritances" were handed out so many of the returning Mormon Battalion members, who were regarded as heroes.

[93] Claire Noall, *Intimate Disciple, a Portrait of Willard Richards*, University of Utah Press, 1957.

[94] Susannah Lee Liptrott had been secretly sealed to Richards June 12, 1843.

prairie," operating a farm of 120 acres about 10 miles out of town, and Willard's journal shows that the children were in the house during much of Jennetta's illness. Susannah Liptrott would have had her hands full just taking care of Jennetta. Willard had a 16 year old second wife named Sarah Longstroth, but his marriage to her was still being kept secret, and Jennetta had not allowed her to live in the house.

If Elizabeth did not help Jennetta, perhaps her service was to a different Richards family member at a different time.

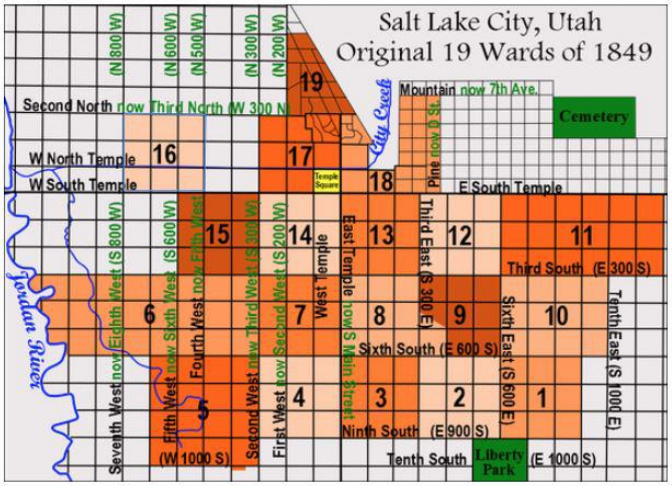
Although Willard Richards was eventually sealed to nine women, most married him around the time he left Nauvoo with Brigham Young in the winter of 1846, and he only took three of them to Winter Quarters, sending the others to St. Louis. The three wives with him were Sarah Longstroth, Susannah Liptrott the nurse, and his niece Amelia Pierson, who had come from Massachusetts a few months after Jennetta's death to help with the children. Sarah Longstroth became pregnant during the trek across Iowa and delivered her child in January 1847 at Winter Quarters. It is possible that Elizabeth, who lived only a block away in her wagon, served as a wet nurse for Sarah's baby, but that seems unlikely since Elizabeth's infant had died about six weeks earlier. She could have looked after Heber and Rhoda Ann, but that was probably Amelia's job.

One other opportunity for Elizabeth to render assistance to a member of the Richards family could have come during her year in St. Louis. There she was acquainted with Sarah Longstroth's younger sister Nanny, Willard's child bride, who lived there with her parents and married him publicly in Winter Quarters when Elizabeth and the Longstroths arrived on the river steamer *Mandan* immediately before heading out for the Valley.

Chapter Three -- Life in Utah

The winter of 1848-49 was long and hard. Pixtons had to kill one of Elizabeth's oxen for food and sell the other for provisions. And it was not long before there were virtually no provisions to be bought.

On February 14, 1849, Great Salt Lake City was divided into 19 wards, each containing nine square blocks. The Pixtons' Salt Lake City 14th Ward bordered on Temple Square, and in the 1860 census it was the home of seven of the 12 apostles and their several wives including familiar Mormon names such as George Romney, Phineas Richards, Parley P. and Orson Pratt, W.W. Phelps, John Taylor, Mathias Cowley, Amasa Lyman, Anthony Ivins, Nathan Tanner, David H. Cannon, Wilford Woodruff, and Franklin D. Richards.



The not-yet-settled country lying west of the Jordan River was named Canaan Ward, soon to become part of West Jordan,[95] which also included the settlements of Dry Creek and East Jordan on the *east* side of the river, later to be parts of Sandy and Midvale, and on the west side of the river North Jordan (later Taylorsville and Bennion), South Jordan (later including Riverton), and Harriman. It was not until 1870 that the term West Jordan referred to a single town. This area would become the center of Elizabeth's life.

In March 1849, John S. Higbee settled with 30 families on the Provo River. A convention was held in Salt Lake City to adopt a constitution, and territorial status was requested. The Saints organized a militia and a provisional government made totally of church leaders. Parties of Mormon Battalion veterans reached Salt Lake with news of gold at Sutter's Mill. Having no other place to live, they swelled the fort to 1,800 inhabitants and worsened the food shortage. At April Conference, Heber C. Kimball prophesied that the people would have clothing in Salt Lake City as cheap as it was in New York City. In May, prospective gold diggers from the East began to come through Salt Lake City with their wagons loaded, and they were in such a hurry to get to the gold fields that clothing could be bought at almost any price. But there was little money and less food to spare.

Some relief to the money and food problem came for Robert that spring when Willard Richards called him to go to the Green River in Wyoming to help Andrew Lamoreaux[96] run ferry boats for travelers. Robert went with Charles Decker, who was Brigham Young's 25 year old son-in-law, and Ephraim Hanks, who had married Decker's wife. Robert returned in the fall of 1849 well fed and with decent pay, but Elizabeth had again been left alone to figure things out for herself. Robert wrote, "When I left home my

[95] The term "West" in West Jordan was meant to distinguish Utah's Jordan River from Palestine's Jordan in the East.

[96] Lamoreaux, who lived close to Pixtons in the 14th Ward, had with his brother transported the famous Nauvoo Temple bell across the plains in his wagon.

wife and daughter Charlotte had no breadstuff, but she found a friend in Ira Eldredge." Ira was a brother to Horace Eldredge, who had traveled with Elizabeth in Brigham Young's Company. A member of the Salt Lake high council, Ira was one of the first settlers in Sugar House, and had experienced a good harvest the previous summer.

It seems likely that Elizabeth's closest neighbor, Willard Richards, also looked after her while supervising his own personal domain. By summer most of his family had moved out of their wagons into a house that ran east and west in a single row of six rooms on South Temple across the street from the new bowery on Temple Square.

In early February 1850 Robert Pixton and Andrew Lamoreaux along with a large group of militia men[97] were ordered to Provo to fight Indians, leaving Elizabeth and Charlotte alone again. Robert was appointed first sergeant under Lamoreaux, who was a captain under General Daniel H. Wells. They saw some action[98] in Spanish Fork and then in Peteetneet (Payson). It could have been during this time that Robert befriended Joseph Harker, the first settler west of the Jordan River, who had also been called to action against the Timpanogos Utes. They were discharged around March.

On June 15, 1850, the very first weekly issue of the *Deseret News* was published with Willard Richards as editor. It was printed each Saturday in an adobe building just west of the Beehive House on South Temple and distributed in the wards on Sundays.

Elizabeth's friend Jane Silcock arrived from Saint Louis in October with her husband Nicholas and their family. By March the Silcocks had moved to a 40 acre farm in Tooele. When they visited the Pixtons they would have learned that Elizabeth was a month away from delivering her fourth child. Having lost the previous three in infancy, she must have felt anxiety about this one, but Robert Pixton Jr., who was born November 6, 1850, survived.[99] He was 11 years younger than Charlotte, his only living sibling.

On January 27, 1851, late word arrived in a San Francisco newspaper that Congress had granted territorial status[100] to Deseret. That evening fireworks were fired in celebration from the roof of the new mercantile store of Livingston and Kinkead a block north of Elizabeth and Robert's house on Main Street. Congress had rejected Deseret's proposal to become a state, but the initial territory did include most of Nevada and western Colorado.

As one of the requirements for territorial status, Deseret was instructed by Congress to count its inhabitants by belatedly completing the U.S. 1850 census, which was accomplished in April and May of 1851. But rather than clarifying the status of the Pixton family and their neighbors, the census raised a question. The family members it named don't make sense. It correctly gave the names and ages of Robert, Elizabeth, and Charlotte. But four other children were listed who were not their children: an eight year old girl named Elizabeth, born in England, a boy named Robert, age six and born in Illinois,

---

[97] Every able-bodied man between the ages of 18 and 45 were required to drill and be called up at any time.
[98] There were about 100 Timpanogos Indians killed and 50 enslaved. Only one militia man, Joseph Higbee, was lost.
[99] Willard Richards' blessing of Robert Pixton Jr. is in Church History Library MS 27307.
[100] Territorial status had actually been granted three months earlier on September 9, 1850. On the same day California became a free state and the New Mexico Territory was created. It was generally understood that Utah would eventually become a slave state.

James age three, born in Deseret, and Mary Ann age one, also born in Deseret. My theory for the four unexplained names is that Elizabeth was taking care of other peoples' children, which was, after all, her vocation. The names preceding the Pixtons on the census were the Willard Richards family on block 76 just north of them. Pixtons were the first family to be listed on block 69, which suggests that no one was yet living on lot six to their north.

Unfortunately, Elizabeth and her biographers wrote nothing about her first three years in Salt Lake City. As a housewife and mother, she had plenty to keep her occupied, but she must have done much more than that. Records show that she associated with the women of her ward. Although she had arrived in Nauvoo too late to be involved in the original Relief Society,[101] many of her neighbors in the Salt Lake 14th Ward had been participants before it was disbanded in the spring of 1844 shortly before the martyrdom of Joseph Smith. Although the organization had not been reinstated by Brigham Young, informal meetings were taking place as early as 1851 and 1852 on a sporadic basis throughout Deseret.[102] The women helped neighbors in need and fed and clothed the wandering Indians whom the Saints had displaced and were affected by famine as severely as the pioneers. Elizabeth participated in Relief Society in the 14th Ward.

Robert wrote that during those two years he was employed on "public works" with Isaac Whittaker,[103] which could have meant a variety of things. In general, that term referred to any civic project, but sometimes the work was done gratis. There was a staff of paid workers, but public works also gave people an opportunity to work off their tithing. For example, the *Deseret News* editorialized on June 14, 1851, "The hands on public works, laboring for nothing and boarding themselves, appear to be the happiest set of fellows among us." And on July 26, "The evening was closed by a ball in the Lord's Storehouse, given to the band and the men who work on the public works." Bishops were sometimes given assignments to provide workers. On April 17, 1852, the presiding bishop, Edward Hunter, posted a notice in the *Deseret News* to bishops that the newspaper would thereafter post for the wards their respective days for assigning workers on public works. The works were supervised by Daniel H. Wells, who soon became the powerful mayor of Salt Lake City, and performed work on streets and public buildings including the tabernacle and later the temple.

Although Robert and Elizabeth had received their temple endowments on February 6, 1846 before leaving Nauvoo, they had for some reason not been sealed to each other in marriage. That omission

---

[101] In the spring of 1842 when the Nauvoo temple walls were only three feet high, Miss Margaret Cook volunteered to do needlework to promote the construction. Twelve women, mostly neighbors, were invited to Kimballs' to organize a sewing society. Eliza R. Snow wrote bylaws. Joseph Smith approved the bylaws, but said he had something "better" in mind and instructed the women to meet with him the next Thursday, March 17, 1842, in the upper room of the Red Brick Store. John Taylor, Willard Richards, and 17 women attended. Emma was chosen Relief Society General President with Sarah Cleveland and Elizabeth Ann Whitney as her counselors. By August, 1,100 members had joined—women had to petition to become members. Regular meetings were held until September 28, 1842, and resumed June 16, 1843, when meetings were divided according to the four city wards in order to accommodate the large number of participants, a different ward meeting each week in rotation in the Masonic hall through August 20th, when meetings stopped again. The Relief Society organization is said to have been disbanded over disagreements between Emma and Joseph Smith over polygamy.

[102] Kate B. Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage*, DUP, Salt Lake City, Utah 1971, vol. 14, p. 71.

[103] Whittaker was a sawyer by trade, a Wilford Woodruff convert, who had come from England in 1841, stayed a couple years in Philadelphia and to the Valley around 1849. He lived close to where West High School now stands and was allotted a farm place in "Camp's Lane" or Over Jordan.

was rectified in the Endowment House on August 9, 1851. Their subsequent children would be born "under the covenant," but the five who had been born earlier would need to be sealed to them. Since Brigham Young taught that this ordinance could only be performed in a dedicated temple, this increased the urgency to complete a temple to replace the Endowment House.

In his autobiography Robert wrote that in 1852 he went "over Jordan" to make a farm. To fully understand this statement requires a bit of history.

Joseph Harker

About when Elizabeth Pixton was arriving in the Valley in 1848, a 34 year old former English sheep farmer named Joseph Harker crossed the Jordan River at about present 3300 South to build a log house, the first home in the Valley located "over Jordan." He bought the land from the apostle George A. Smith, who had acquired it from an old Spanish claim, but lost his first crop there due to flooding of the river and decided to re-locate in Cottonwood. By the spring of 1849 Harker was joined by John Bennion, Thomas Mackey, and five other men, who that fall harvested the first successful crop there. About the same time Alonzo P. Raymond and James P. Pettigrew, two recently discharged Mormon Battalion members, were moving their families into dugouts on the east side of the Jordan River. Soon Robert Pixton joined the group. He wrote, "We fenced in what was called the big field. I had 35 acres laid off to me. We made a ditch from Archibald Gardner's millrace at a cost of about $500." Robert worked there regularly on his farm, but didn't yet build a house there, returning to his home in the 14th Ward after work.

The settlement became known as Harker's Settlement, and later as the North Jordan Branch[104] as a part of the West Jordan Ward when it was organized in January 1852. At that time Harker was ordained first counselor to Bishop Robinson, and when Robinson was called on a mission Harker was called to be bishop of the ward and its branches in neighboring settlements. They were told by Brigham Young that fall to take the water out of the Jordan River and make farms on the bench below the cabins. Harker wrote, "We got Jesse Fox to survey a ditch and (in) the winter we got a grant from the legislature of 200 dollars." The population of the West Jordan Ward including all the branches reached 361 by the end of 1852.[105]

The grounds for the Salt Lake Temple were dedicated and surveyed in the spring of 1853. The cornerstones were laid at conference on April 6 with an elaborate ceremony and procession involving bands, marching workmen, and church leaders.

---

[104] We are going to be talking about this settlement for the rest of this book. Unfortunately, it has gone by many names: Harker's Settlement, Harker's Fort, Over Jordan, Lower Branch, North Jordan, North Jordan Branch, and later North Jordan Ward. The first written mention I could find of the name Taylorsville appeared in the *Deseret News* on February 22, 1855, in a report of George A. Smith and Ezra T. Benson on their visits to the branches "over Jordan." The U.S. Post Office assigned the name of Taylorsville before October 20, 1858, when it was published as a stop on the weekly mail route to Cedar Valley and back to Salt Lake City. I will try to reduce the confusion by calling it Taylorsville after 1858 except in the context of an L.D.S. church unit.

[105] https://www.utah.gov/pmn/files/456127.pdf page 19.

On September 15 Elizabeth Pixton accomplished another successful delivery when her namesake daughter Elizabeth was born.[106] Charlotte was by then 14 and Robert Jr. was almost three.

On January 24, 1854, a handful of women from various wards in Salt Lake met informally to organize a women's Relief Society and adjourned to February 9, when a larger group assembled and resolved to raise means, purchase materials, and make clothing for Indian women and children. They elected a president, two counselors, a secretary, an assistant secretary, and a treasurer, following the pattern established by the Female Relief Society of Nauvoo. At least one of the seventeen women, the assistant secretary Amanda Barnes Smith of the 12th Ward, had been a Relief Society member in Nauvoo. The newly elected president Matilda M. Dudley, a thirty-five-year-old single mother and convert from Pennsylvania, hosted the initial meeting at her home in the Salt Lake City 13th Ward. The new society comprised women from various ward congregations, and during the next four months they utilized various members' homes for their long work meetings.

In the middle of this activity another event happened which must have affected Elizabeth deeply. Willard Richards died March 11 after experiencing weakness, orthopnea, and dyspnea. He was only 49 years old.

The women met weekly through June 13, and the movement quickly spread to other wards. The spontaneous group disbanded in June when Brigham Young returned from a trip to southern Utah and urged the women to meet as wards, which actually accelerated the movement. Amanda Smith and Matilda Dudley became presidents in their own wards. Lucy Meserve Smith began a society in Provo.

Eliza P. Lyman

Eliza Partridge Lyman referred in her journal to the first meeting of the Fourteenth Ward Relief Society, established June 6, 1854, immediately following Brigham Young's announcement that ward Relief Societies should be formed to assist with Indian relief.[107] She wrote:

> The sisters in the fourteenth ward, there were 17 at the first meeting (of which I was a resident) met at the schoolhouse with their Bishop Abraham Hoagland, to be organized into a society for the purpose of carrying out more thoroughly the instructions of President Young. Sister Lydia Partridge was appointed President and Phebe Pratt Secretary. Phebe lived on corner of South and West Temple. Others were appointed to visit the sisters of the Ward and ascertain what they were willing to give toward clothing the poor Indians.

---

[106] This date comes from the younger Elizabeth's obituary and Find a Grave. Her baptismal record in the North Jordan Ward gives 15 December 1852.

[107] Salt Lake City Fourteenth Ward Relief Society, Report, 1856-1858, as Published in "Relief Society in the Early Days," July 1, 1895. Also, *Salt Lake City Fourteenth Ward Relief Society, "Relief Society in the Early Days" (Report), Woman's Exponent (Salt Lake City, UT), July 1, 1895, vol. 24, no. 3, p. 21.* https://www.churchhistorianspress.org/the-first-fifty-years-of-relief-society/part-2/2-3?lang=eng. See image of the original document at lib.byu.edu, courtesy of Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.

Sister Lyman recorded making "a small gift to the society for the Lamanites," some "five yards of factory cloth, but I hope to be able to give more soon." The groups apparently disbanded during 1854 or 1855 after the immediate need for clothing Indian women and children had been met.

The year following the harvest of 1854 was known as the year of the grasshoppers. The *Deseret News*[108] reported: "The grasshoppers filled the sky for three miles deep, or as far as they could be seen without the aid of telescopes, and somewhat resembling a snowstorm." Grasshoppers would fly overhead several hours a day for two or three weeks. The drought that year compounded the problem. Grasshoppers had appeared in Utah nearly every year since 1851, but in 1855 it was estimated that 70% of grains, vegetables, and fruits had been destroyed, the worst year of the century. The first, second, and third sowings of wheat, corn and buckwheat were destroyed. This was compounded by a greatly reduced runoff from mountain snows and by the immigration that year of 4,225 new persons to the Valley, not to mention the increasing pressure on the herds by starving Indians.[109] The farms south of Salt Lake City were nearly a desert. The Church and most cattle owners moved their herds to higher winter areas for feed, and then winter came early and was the most severe since the Mormons arrived in 1847.

Robert wrote that the grasshoppers took all of his wheat crop and his family suffered for want of bread—the family lived on bran for "some time." He wrote of trying to buy flour from Brother Johnson of the 14th Ward—they had gone without breakfast--but Johnson would not sell any, saying he wanted to trade it to pay for his house painting (which he never got around to doing for the next 16 years). After the hoppers left, the Pixtons managed to raise some corn. Then Robert left a gap of years in his journal when he wrote, "Nothing particular happened until 1857." He was wrong. A lot of important things happened.

For one thing, on November 4, 1854, his son Willard Cooper Pixton was born. For another, this was the time when Elizabeth began her first dive into Relief Society, a calling that would occupy her until her death. And, although Elizabeth and Robert may have been unaware of it, 1855 was the year in which her aged father John Cooper entered the workhouse in Chesterfield, England at the very time when she was becoming deeply involved in helping the poor.

On March 3, 1856, a property deed was issued for the Pixton property on Main Street which read: "Robert Pixton, lot 7, block 69. Recorded on county record, Thomas Bullock, Salt Lake County Recorder."[110] Possibly the issuance of this deed for property that Robert already owned merely reflects the efforts of the U. S. Government in the new territory to codify the pioneer survey. Or it might signal the procurement of a building permit on the city lot or to sell a portion of the property. The Salt Lake business district[111] was beginning to develop, and Elizabeth and Robert Pixton were living right in the

---

[108] *Deseret News*, June 27, 1855, p. 5.

[109] Davis Bitton and Linda P. Wilcox*, Pestiferous Ironclads: The Grasshopper Problem in Pioneer Utah*, Utah Historical Quarterly (Volume 46, Number 4, Fall 1978.)

[110] This was found written on a two by three inch paper in Elizabeth's possession according to *Biographical Record of Salt Lake City and Vicinity*, National Historical Records (ca. 1903).

[111] John S. McCormick, *The Historic Buildings of Downtown Salt Lake City*, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, 1982 states: there was no provision in the original plan of Salt Lake City for a business district. Beginning in about 1850, however, one began to develop. It was centered on the west side of Main Street between South Temple and First South. Through the 1850s and 1860s, commercial development was relatively slow. *In the late 1860s, however, it began to accelerate, and the business district began to expand.* By the turn of the century, it

center of it. One sign of this was the opening that year of James Townsend's Salt Lake House directly across Main Street from the Pixton's property. At the time, it was the grandest hotel in the city. It was probably about this time that Robert began to sell parts of his property. He sold the northeast corner of his property to Nicholas Groesbeck[112] sometime before 1858 when Salt Lake County adopted tract books to track real estate transactions. Edward Martin[113] procured about 60% of the interior half of Lot 7 from Robert during that time as well.

After a temporary decline in 1855 when the need for Indian clothing abated, the Relief Society was revitalized to focus on the needs of the poor among the Saints. On September 19, 1856, Bishop Hoagland re-established the Female Relief Society in the 14th Ward, this time with Phebe Carter Woodruff as president, who with two counselors, a secretary, a treasurer, a visiting committee, other officers, and a total of 127 members made a substantial organization. Elizabeth Pixton and the bishop's wife, Agnes Taylor Hoagland, were appointed to a visiting committee of nine women to collect subscriptions and enquire into the circumstances and necessities of the poor and report to the president of the society. Their first report showed that $547.17 had been produced for the poor, brethren in the army, the handcart company, and the Perpetual Emigrating Fund, and quilts[114] were donated to the temple during the 18 months from organization until March 1858, when they were again disbanded, this time due to the threat of Johnston's Army.

Phebe Carter Woodruff

On October 4, 1856, Brigham Young was made aware of the plight of the Martin and Willey Handcart Companies.[115] Relief Society women gathered clothing and bedding for the handcart pioneers. Lucy Meserve Smith, who was deeply involved in the project as Relief Society President in Provo wrote,

> We did all we could with the aid of the good brethren and sisters to comfort the needy as they came in with handcarts late in the fall… Our society was short of funds then, we could not do

---

extended one block deep along both side of main Street from South Temple to Fourth south. Originally, Mormon Church authorities distributed all land in the city, including property along Main Street, as "inheritances" to individual Mormons. Much of Main Street became the home of prominent community leaders, including Ezra Taft Benson, Daniel H Wells, Edward Hunter, Jedediah M. Grant, and the Walker brothers. Some of the inheritances were quickly sold off for commercial use, while others remained residential property throughout the 1880s.

[112] Groesbeck was a Mormon living in Springfield, Illinois, who had known Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln before he moved to Utah in 1856. He made a fortune in merchandising and mining, but was known primarily for buying, improving, and renting downtown real estate.

[113] Edward Martin had been a member of the Mormon Battalion and lived in the Salt Lake City 14th Ward. He led the infamous Martin Handcart Company in 1856. Martin acquired the remainder of the west half of Lot 7 on September 19, 1860, and then he sold it all to Alexander John Daft on December 11, 1871 for $800.

[114] I recommend that you read Carol Holindrake Nielson, *The Salt Lake City 14th Ward Album Quilt, 1857, Stories of the Relief Society Women and their Quilt*, University of Utah Press, 2004.

[115] The first rescue party met the handcart company on October 19. The Willie Company arrived in Salt Lake City on November 9. Sixty-eight members had died.

> much, but the four bishops could hardly carry the bedding and other clothing we got together the first time we met.

The tragedy of the handcart company topped off a difficult year of draught and economic disruption, which led the Brethren to conclude that the Church needed a thorough reform to increase individual worthiness. Brigham Young's first counselor, Jedediah M. Grant, took interest in the cause and led a movement now known as the Mormon Reformation beginning with a four-day conference in Kaysville in which 500 church members were re-baptized. The movement spread rapidly through all the Mormon settlements. In December the entire all-Mormon Utah Territorial Legislature was rebaptized and reconfirmed by the Quorum of the Twelve. This was a drive to weed out unfaithful Mormons and separate the Church further from the gentile influences building in Deseret.

Charlotte and William Van Dyke some years later

Four days after Christmas in 1856, Elizabeth Pixton's 16 year old daughter Charlotte married 26 year old William Van Dyke in President Young's office after being rebaptized. This marriage of her first daughter must have been emotional experience for her mother, depriving Elizabeth of her only constant companion, her favorite Relief Society sister, and the second mother to her three younger children ages 2-6. Charlotte had married the same William Van Dyke who had driven a covered wagon most of the way to the Valley just behind Elizabeth's when Charlotte was just eight.[116]

I don't have the equivalent ward records for the 14th Ward, but during the next year in the West Jordan Ward there were 205 rebaptisms, so every good church member seemed to be doing it. Robert mentioned that he was teaching in the 14th Ward at the time, and the reformation was the topic of the day. In May 1857 news came to the Valley of the murder of Parley P. Pratt in Arkansas by Hector McLean, the estranged husband of one of Pratt's plural wives. Many Mormons viewed the death as a martyrdom and blamed the death on southern Gentiles, which may have played a role in the Mountain Meadows massacre a few months later.

Through these difficult times the Relief Society thrived. In June, Phebe Woodruff's husband, Wilford, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, noted in his diary that he attended the 14th Ward women's meeting on June 17, 1857:

> In the afternoon I attended the 14th Ward female Relief Society at my house with Robert Campbell. We both addressed the meeting. There were about 50 present--sewing, knitting, sewing carpet rags, making quilts etc. It is a laudable undertaking. All the females in the ward meet at my house each Wednesday afternoon. They open and close with prayer. Mrs. Phebe

[116] He had left the company at the Sweetwater and returned to Iowa to drive a freight wagon for Livingston and Kinkead the next year before returning for a third crossing with his mother and step-father's family in 1850 and settling with them in Lehi. When his parents moved to Cedar City William returned to Lehi where he built the house to which he brought Charlotte.

> W. Woodruff is president and Mrs. Pratt secretary. They clothe all the poor in the ward and during the last quarter they made a donation to the perpetual emigrating fund of $126. I wish all go and do likewise.

At the Pioneer Day celebration that summer in Big Cottonwood Canyon, Porter Rockwell brought to Brigham Young the disturbing news that the U.S. Army was mobilizing at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas against the Mormons. In August, Brigham activated the Nauvoo Legion, which included all able-bodied men in the territory between 15 and 60 years old and sent a reconnaissance unit under militia Colonel Robert T. Burton to observe the oncoming regiments and protect L.D.S. immigrants traveling the Mormon trail.

During all this tumult Elizabeth Pixton had another baby in Salt Lake City on August 28, 1857, whom she named Sarah. The baby was blessed in the 14th Ward by Isaac Morley on October 7, four weeks after Mountain Meadows and a week before Ft. Bridger was burned by Porter Rockwell and men of the Nauvoo Legion. Robert was called to defend Echo Canyon as captain of the first ten in Major Blair's Company. According to Robert's history, they stayed in Echo Canyon "several months." It appears that they were there from early October through November, possibly to mid-December. When a big snow caused the U. S. Army to decide to set up winter quarters in Wyoming, the Mormon militia was no longer needed in the canyon, so Robert walked 35 miles to get home. It was during his time at Echo Canyon that their baby Sarah died. Except for the death of Mary at Island 69, Elizabeth endured the passing of each of their four babies without Robert's presence.

In January 1858 Brigham Young ordered the stakes and wards to raise an army of 1,000 men for a year. The next month Thomas L. Kane arrived incognito in Salt Lake City via San Bernardino to aid in peace negotiations between Brigham Young and his replacement, Governor Alfred Cumming, who had been sent from Washington with the Army. In March in a special conference Brigham Young announced and began to execute the contingency plan to evacuate all the territory north of Point of the Mountain and to send 500 families to the White Mountains in the Nevada desert. On March 24, leaders of the Salt Lake and nearby wards were assigned provisional destinations in Utah, Juab, Millard, and Iron Counties. The militia maintained patrols in Echo Canyon and prepared to protect property in the abandoned settlements.

In April after a churchwide fast to raise money for the poor, Robert moved Elizabeth and the children to Lehi to stay with Charlotte and William and then returned to Salt Lake City because he had been ordered to stand guard at the tithing office. Elizabeth was pregnant again.

On April 4, Governor Cumming and Thomas Kane arrived at Brigham Young's office and the "amiable governor met no resistance in taking over his office and establishing a comfortable relationship with his predecessor, Brigham Young."[117] On April 23 Brigham Young visited encampments of the Bountiful and other wards along the lower Provo River. Centerville Ward had moved to Spanish Fork. Big Cottonwood Ward was sent to Beaver, but most wards settled north of the Provo River. An estimated 30,000 people moved—10,000 from outside Salt Lake Valley and the rest from the city, 800 wagons per day. In late May, the Church counted only 2,400 people remaining in Salt Lake City, and many of them were people from northern Utah who were underway and passing through.

---

[117] Richard D. Poll, *The Move South*, BYU Studies. Journal 29:4, p. 70.

On June 26 General Johnston and 5,000[118] men marched through Salt Lake City to Camp Floyd, west of Point of the Mountain. The day they arrived in the Valley, Robert Pixton saw them go by from his post at the tithing office. On June 30, with the crisis over, Brigham Young announced that he was returning home, and the Saints were at liberty to follow.[119] Most families were gone for 2-3 months before coming home and their return was uncoordinated, spanning July and part of August. Robert brought Elizabeth and their family back on July 6, 1858. He wrote that he was not able to raise much grain that year due to the move.

That fall ward meetings were resumed on an as-needed basis until re-instituted late in the year. The old Salt Lake Tabernacle was not put back into use until 1859. The Relief Society did not revive for a decade.

Sometime in the spring of 1859[120] Robert moved his family to his farm in Taylorsville,

> …as Main Street was becoming too public for me and too dangerous for my children. I rented my place in town, thinking my farm would do me more good if I would live upon it. I built me a good house nearby the field on the bottom.

The family must have already been spending considerable time "over Jordan," since ward records dated December 11, 1858, show that Robert Pixton Jr. was baptized that day in West Jordan. His birthday was given as December 6, 1850, so he had just turned eight. Joseph Cooper Pixton was born a week later. On New Year's Day 1859, the West Jordan Ward recorded that Elizabeth Pixton "born Dec 15, 1852 in Salt Lake City" was baptized and confirmed in West Jordan by Samuel Bennion. She would have been barely over six years old.[121]

In March or April 1859, the West Jordan Ward was reorganized with a new bishop--the miller Archibald Gardner, with Daniel R. Allen and Royal B. Cutler counselors.[122] Since Gardner lived a few miles south of North Jordan, the governance of the West Jordan Ward shifted to the Mill Branch, which is now in the town of West Jordon. Gardner would serve as bishop for 33 years. Meetings were held at a log house. The ward included everyone living west of the river from North Jordan to Herriman and on "a small tract of land on the east side," which was Dry Creek. Branches of the ward were organized at North Jordan and later in South Jordan.

Sometime that year Charlotte and William Van Dyke moved from Lehi to Plain City, Weber County.

Robert was selling off more parts of Lot 7 in the city. On July 9, 1859, he sold a store lot to Alexander Daft for $400 with 25 feet of frontage on Main Street extending west 100 feet into the center of the

---

[118] David Roberts, *The Brink of War*, Smithsonian Magazine, June 2008. This was a third of the entire U.S. Army at the time. Elsewhere I have read lower estimates of 2,500 and even 1,400. In any case, the force was much larger than the Mormon militia.

[119] Poll, Richard, D., *The Move South*, BYU Studies. Journal 29:4, p. 82.

[120] In their autobiographies both Elizabeth and Robert wrote that the family moved in the spring of 1859. I am taking their word for it but feel they may have mis-remembered in light of the West Jordan church records.

[121] Elizabeth's age was given in the 1860 census as seven. Her obituary gives her birthday as September 15, 1852. All three sources suggest a baptism before the usual age of eight.

[122] William G. Hartley, *The Miller, the Bishop, and the "Move South*. B.Y.U. Studies, Journal 20:1. Delila Gardner Hughes, *The Life of Archibald Gardner*, Alpine publishing Co. 1939, p. 72 quotes a newspaper article March 8, 1859, reporting that Brigham Young had summoned Archibald from Spanish Fork to appoint him bishop.

block to where the old adobe house stood. It was adjacent to the lot on the northeast corner which he had sold to Nicholas Groesbeck.

That year it was decided to build a log school on top of the west bluff of the river on 4800 South which was closer to where most people in Taylorsville lived.

The United States census for 1860 was counted on August 23. The Pixtons were living close to Joseph Harker and Samuel Bennion. Robert valued his real estate at $750 and his personal estate at $1,000, which could not have included his downtown property. Charlotte was, of course, no longer with them. By this time Robert Jr. was 10, Elizabeth seven, Willard six, and Joseph one. Eliza Harker, one of Joseph's wives, lived one door away.

During the summer of 1860, the organizers of the farming field in Taylorsville decided to break up their joint property, which Robert wrote left him with a house but no land over Jordan. That September Robert sold more of his downtown Lot 7, a long strip on the extreme south end that extended 165 feet west and a rod wide (16.5 feet), just wide enough for a single storefront. The buyers were Thomas Hawkins and Alfred Best, a tinsmith who ran a hardware store. The same day Robert sold another large portion of the northwest corner of the property on the interior of the block to Edward Martin, relinquishing the whole west half of the lot.

Discouraged over the loss of his Taylorsville property, Robert went north with Elizabeth and their baby Joseph to see Charlotte and William and to investigate the possibility of moving to Plains City. When they returned home, two year old Joseph became sick with typhoid fever, requiring them to sit with him day and night. Robert was afraid Joseph would die and that it would weaken their faith, "my wife having lost four children. One in England, one in Arkansas, and one whilst I was in the Battalion and one in Salt Lake City." After praying and studying the scriptures all night he had a spiritual experience, hearing the voice of the Lord saying that Joseph would survive, that Robert's sins were forgiven, that he would go on a mission, and that the "the desire of thy wife shall be toward thee and thou shalt have more wives. Amen. Jan 23, 1861."[123] He did not go immediately on a mission, but the experience profoundly changed his life.

And Joseph survived.

This was a tumultuous time, not just for the Pixtons. After President Lincoln was elected the previous November by less than 40% of voters in a four-way contest, seven southern states had seceded from the Union by February 1861. Lincoln was inaugurated March 4, and it was a difficult year for farmers, beginning with a lean winter. The country was entering the first year of the Civil War.

It was a year later on May 19, 1862, that Robert set out from Taylorsville on his mission to England, leaving Elizabeth once again for the sake of service to the Church. Robert Jr. was 11 years old, Elizabeth was nine, Willard was seven, and Joseph was three. Elizabeth was 42 and once again pregnant, in her 12th week. Robert was probably receiving sufficient rent on his property on Main Street to support the

[123] Robert wrote about this revelation to Brigham Young. The letter can be found at the Church History Library CR 1234 1.

family. Since this story is about Elizabeth, I will not give a full account of Robert's mission, although he kept an informative and impressive mission journal, which I recommend reading.[124]

Elder Robert Pixton

Robert set foot on shore in Liverpool at noon on August 6, 1862. According to the *Millennial Star*, he was assigned that day to the Nottingham conference although he didn't go there until October. He went first to Elizabeth's foster parents, her Uncle Joseph and Aunt Mary Wrigley in Manchester, with whom she has lived as a nurse girl. Then he visited his own relatives in Altrincham where he discovered that a financial inheritance from his grandfather, John Pickstone, was awaiting him, and finally to Elizabeth's extended family in Chesterfield and Barlow.

Here is the account of his visits to Elizabeth's family.[125]

> August 9, 1862. I arrived in Manchester about 9 am. I found Uncle Wrigley's House and knocked at the door and Aunt came to it but did not know me. I sat down and had talked to them some time when Uncle suspected something and asked if it was Robert, and I confessed. I visited around town and stayed with them a day or two and then visited Altrincham.
>
> August 10, 1862. After breakfast, Aunt Hallatt (Mary Wrigley) and I went to Cheetham Hill to see Anne, my wife's sister, and her husband, about four miles (probably from Wrigley's). Got there at 11 o'clock, but she did not know me. After dinner we went to see Aunt Martha[126] and her husband, but I didn't like the course he took, (an opposing position to the Mormons). Aunt Hallatt and I came back on the bus and Anne came part way with us. We got to Uncle Wrigley's at sundown. I had some talk with Uncle on Mormons, which he took very well. Aunt went to bed. I bid her goodbye. Stayed with (Uncle) late.

Deducing from the 1861 census, it appears that to get to Martha Vosper's house they crossed the River Irwell north of Salford to visit a neighborhood on the west end of Cheetham Hill called Kersal, which is about three miles north of where the Wrigleys lived. Anne and her husband George Holgate lived on Coke Street. Since Robert and Mary Hallatt were on foot it appears that the homes of the Anne and Martha were within walking distance of each other, so they may have both been in Kersal. Aunt Martha's husband was named Thomas Vosper. They had four children between seven and 15. He was a butler who worked for a 62 year old bachelor named James Hatton, an iron merchant who employed 13 men and two boys. Perhaps Vosper's profession explains his haughty reception of Robert. Interestingly,

---

[124] A transcription of part of the journal is attached to Robert's Memories in Family Search KWNV-ZVN and the original can be viewed at the Church History Library MS 5474.

[125] His journal is in some places nearly illegible, and the various transcriptions vary considerably and sometimes conflict. I am going to give you my own transcription, correcting Robert's spelling and grammar for ease of reading. In some important cases my version is significantly different from other transcriptions. It is worth reading each version to get a full picture. Some of the journal entries are repeated in his autobiography, and I have sometimes used these. See Appendix to compare versions.

[126] This was Martha Cooper Vosper, a sister to Elizabeth's father.

James Hatton, the iron merchant for whom Thomas Vosper worked, lived only about 500 feet from Coke Street.

> August 11, 1862. At 7 am I got up and took breakfast and bid Uncle goodbye. I had to walk about two miles to the railway to go to Altrincham.

I have left out Robert's entries on his visits to his own family. He returned to Wrigleys on August 14. It rained the next day, and he wrote a letter to Elizabeth.

> August 17, 1862. In the forenoon went to church with Uncle Wrigley. After dinner at his house, I talked to Uncle on the first principles of the Gospel. After tea I went to the seminary up Eccles Road near Mayo farm. I had a pleasant walk by myself, returned, and had another talk with Uncle until bedtime. Aunt went to a neighbor's house to sleep, and I bid her good night and blessed her for her kindness to me and to Brother Kay and his wife.
>
> August 18, 1862. Got up at 4 am. Got breakfast and bid Uncle goodbye and to the railway to Chesterfield. Got there at ten to eleven oclock. Left my carpetbag in the office, bought something to eat and went on five miles to Aunt Margerisson in Barlow. Got dinner and then took a rest and then tea. Elizabeth had gone to Chatworth but came back soon at dinner time. She asked me to pray and then went to rest.

Elizabeth's Uncle Joseph Wrigley
FamilySearch LHHT-PPX

Elizabeth Hallett Margerisson was an older sister of Elizabeth's mother, just older than Mary Hallett Wrigley.

> August 19, 1862. Took breakfast. I had a talk with the old (woman) on the Gospel, but she thought the good old way was the best. About 10 oclock I bid her goodbye and left for the railway station at Chesterfield. I went to…the grave of Father Cooper, who died March 28, 1862, in the 72nd year of his age.

By this time Robert had been in England a little over two weeks. He wrote a few lines to Brother Cannon in Liverpool, took a walk, and posted the letter after which he took the train to Mansfield with two other missionaries to begin proselyting. On September third he wrote a letter to Uncle Wrigley.

Back in America, his son Willard Pixton was baptized in West Jordan, just short of eight years old by John Bennion and confirmed by Samuel Bennion on October 19. On December 7 Elizabeth bore her last child, Sariah. About a month later she had a likeness taken which she later sent to Robert with a departing missionary. West Jordan records show that Willard received a blessing on January 11, 1863. This seems

unusual for a boy of eight years, and uncharacteristically, the spaces on the form for his parents' names was blank.

After a conference in Nottingham in January, which was attended by George Q. Cannon, Robert and his companion, Brother Chase, accompanied the apostle on the train to church headquarters in Liverpool, where he received a letter from Elizabeth dated November 2 and finished November 24, a couple weeks before Sariah's birth, so he didn't likely learn of her birth at that time. He returned to Mansfield three days later.

Robert worked in the Nottingham district until April, when he was transferred to Warwickshire. There he worked hard to organize immigration groups. On August 1, a newly arrived missionary named Joseph Romney[127] brought him a package from Elizabeth which included the picture of herself and Sariah. He wrote "I was much pleased with it." All through his mission Robert maintained an exchange of letters with the Wrigleys and visited them when his mission assignments allowed it. In November 1863 he attended a conference in Birmingham, about 100 miles south of Manchester. He wrote in his journal, "After conference I got leave to visit my friends in Manchester. I arrived at Uncle Wrigleys. They were rather down hearted, their only daughter had just gone to South America with her husband."[128]

Elizabeth and Sariah 1862
FamilySearch KWV3-GVF

Robert visited the Wrigley family in Salford at least[129] one more time in April 1865 before leaving his mission on the vessel *Bellewood*, landing at Castle Gardens, New York the last day of May. America was still in tumult from the assassination of President Lincoln a month earlier. Deseret was in tumult as well due to the outbreak of the Blackhawk War that spring in Sanpete County. Robert's trip home was a long one. After a fairly easy trip by water and rail to the trailhead in Nebraska they were held up eight weeks, and then had a long wagon trip to Utah, arriving in mid-October 1865 after being away nearly three and a half years. Robert Jr. was a month short of turning 15. Elizabeth was 13--Robert had missed her puberty. Willard would be nine in November. Joseph was nearly seven, and Sariah, whom he had never seen, was nearly three. He had four grandchildren by Charlotte, one of whom was born during his mission. Without Robert by her side, Elizabeth had managed the births of three and the deaths of four of their ten children.

While Robert was in England, there were massive changes on Main Street. The business district was moving rapidly southward with buildings springing up on Lots 6 and 7 of block 69 fronting Main Street. The most notable of these was the Eagle Emporium,[130] a general mercantile store which was built on the

[127] Joseph Romney was sent to the British Mission in April 1863 from the Salt Lake City 14th Ward, probably a personal friend of Elizabeth and Robert.
[128] Their daughter Elizabeth Wrigley had married George Blackburn the previous April. I could find no evidence of their trip to South America. If they did go there, they returned before their first child Mary Elizabeth was born in Salford June 26, 1865.
[129] Unfortunately, we don't have the diary covering the last year of Robert's mission.
[130] Eagle Emporium became the first ZCMI building and later the headquarters of Zions Bank.

southeast corner of First South and Main in 1864 by the territory's first millionaire, William Jennings. Stores were probably standing on the property in the northeast corner of Lot 7 which Robert had sold earlier to Groesbeck. But the biggest change must have been the building erected on property that the Pixtons still owned east of their adobe house. I suppose that Elizabeth Pixton must have given permission for the project in Robert's absence, since the two story building was probably constructed in the spring of 1864. On July 7 of that year an advertisement appeared in the *Deseret News* for "Edward Martin--house, signs, carriages, and ornamental painter." By January 16, 1865, Martin was advertising the building as a "New Portrait Gallery." He was producing daguerreotype photographs,[131] decorative frames, and painting supplies. The store had been operating for over a year when Robert returned.

Robert soon built a larger store building adjoining Martin's gallery on the south. It was about twice as large, and had two stories, later known as the Eagle House. His first tenant was a recently returned fellow British missionary named Thomas Taylor,[132] who owned a mercantile store in Lehi with his brother William. T & W Taylor Mercantile was opened in January 1866 in the Pixtons' building, so the store must have gone up quickly, so quickly that I wonder whether the construction of the building might have begun even before Robert's return from England. Robert financed the construction with the inheritance money he had received in England. According to his missionary diary he had received £617, a significant sum, equal to about $73,000 in current U.S. dollars.[133] Later the Pixtons added a third building to their property fronting Main Street known as the Globe Warehouse, which he began renting to Henry W. Naisbitt, another general merchandiser, who had moved from the Eagle Emporium around June 1867.

Near the end of 1866 Brigham Young decided it was time to re-establish the Relief Society for the third time. He called Eliza R. Snow to travel throughout the Church helping bishops organize societies in their wards. Eliza had kept her minute book from the Nauvoo Relief Society—she had been named secretary after the initial meeting. The organizing took her several years, and Brigham Young backed her up with the bishops: [134]

> Now, Bishops, you have smart women for wives, many of you; let them organize Female Relief Societies in the various wards….you will find that the sisters will be the mainspring of the movement…They will find rooms for the poor and obtain the means for supporting them ten times quicker than even the Bishop could….She is almost sure to be successful, especially if she appeals to those of her own sex. If you take this course you will relieve the wants of the poor a great deal better than they are now….We recommend these Female Relief Societies to be organized immediately.

It is important to point out to modern readers that the calling of a ward Relief Society President in those days was significantly different in those days. As with 19th century Mormon bishops, the calling was generally for life. Relief Society presidents were not just set apart, but ordained, and performed functions now reserved for the male priesthood such as the anointing with consecrated oil and healing the sick.

---

[131] Perhaps Martin had produced the likeness of Elizabeth and Sariah.
[132] Taylor settled in the Salt Lake City 14th Ward, and later became the bishop.
[133] https://www.uwyo.edu/numimage/currency.htm . Calculated in 2022.
[134] December 18, 1867. Kate Carter, Our Pioneer Heritage, DUP, Salt Lake city, Utah, 1971, Vol. 14, p. 78..

Sometime in 1867 Elizabeth and Robert Pixton donated a portion of their property in Taylorsville to build the town's first permanent schoolhouse, which became known as the Rock School.[135] In the 1870's two rooms were added (to make three.) The same year the Deseret Telegraph Company completed 500 miles of wire which connected Logan on the north to St. George on the south.

Marinda Bateman

Eliza R. Snow got around to organizing the women in West Jordan on April 12, 1868, when Marinda Allen Bateman[136] was called to be president of the West Jordan Relief Society, the first to be organized south of Salt Lake City according to Marinda's biography. President Bateman's first step was to appoint a woman to preside over the North Jordan branch of her ward, and a meeting was arranged on June 21 in the new Rock School to accomplish this.

On Saturday, June 19, two days before the scheduled North Jordan Relief Society organizational meeting, the second event promised in Robert's vision seven years earlier came to pass: Robert would enter into polygamy. He was sealed in the Endowment House to Rebecca Savage Wheatley,[137] a 31 year old immigrant from Basford, Nottinghamshire, who had arrived in Deseret a year after Robert's return from his mission with an adopted 10 year old niece named Letitia. It is possible that Robert had known Rebecca during the early part of his mission when he was assigned to Mansfield, the town of Rebecca's birth. At that time, she was living in Basford, another part of Nottingham, with her first husband, Jervis Wheatley, but Robert was frequently in Basford during that time for missionary meetings and member activities. Rebecca and Letitia immigrated without Jervis, and by the time they had settled into Salt Lake City, Jervis was married to another woman ten years younger than Rebecca.

It is hard to imagine that Elizabeth did not have Robert's second marriage on her mind the following Sunday when her Relief Society President and members of her bishopric and branch presidency met with her. Here is the record of that meeting.

> Minutes of the Organization of the Lower Branch Female Relief Society. Met at the Lower Branch school house. From the Mill branch presidency, Elder Turner, J. G. Hill, first and second counselors there, also Samuel Bennion and others of the Lower Branch (later known as Taylorsville). Bishop Gardner was unavoidably deterred from being present. Elizabeth Pixton was nominated and confirmed as President or presiding Teacher in the branch, and sister Mary B. Bennion and Sister Esther A. Bennion to be her assistants. Relief Society president Marinda Allen Bateman was asked to speak. She arose and (said) she knew of no better instructions to offer than those contained in an address of Sister E. R. Snow to the sisters of the Society

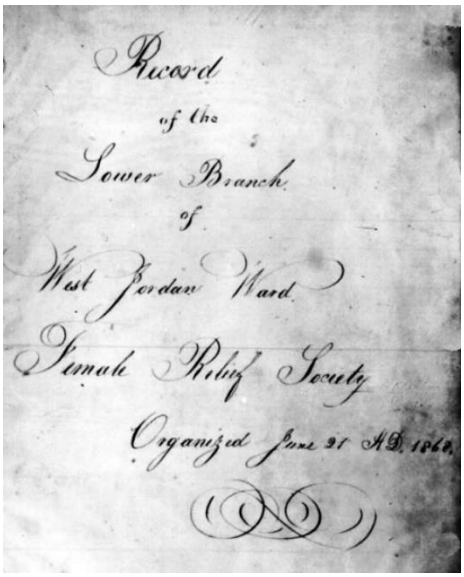
---

[135] It was located near the Murray-Taylorsville and 1100 West on what was known as Pixton Hill. (see Wikipedia article on Taylorsville.)

[136] Marinda held the office a year, and then was called with Samuel to a mission on the Muddy in Nevada's Moapa Valley, later moving to Southern Utah briefly before returning permanently to West Jordan. Marinda was the wife of Samuel Bateman, a bodyguard to Brigham Young, and a highly respected midwife.

[137] The sealing date is given as June 20, 1868, without documentation in the Pixton Family History by Sheri Eardley Slaughter, 1997, but the Ordinances tab in Family Search gives June 19, 1868.

published in the *Deseret News*. Having read the address, Sister Bateman added a few words of counsel and exhortation to those newly chosen and concluded by calling upon them to speak a few words, which accordingly they did, testifying of their willingness to try to learn and then fulfill their duties. Minutes by E. H. Bennion.



The new branch Relief Society met for the first time a week later at the schoolhouse on June 30 with Sister Esther Bennion recording the minutes.[138] Obviously the priesthood was in charge, as Joseph Harker gave the opening and closing prayers and Samuel Bennion spoke. Elizabeth Pixton arose and said that though few of the sisters were present, she had good hopes that when the object of the society was fairly understood the sisters would gladly take part in contributing their mite.

The Lower Branch Relief Society met again on August 5, and all prayers and talks were offered by the sisters from that time on with little or no mention of priesthood leadership in the minutes. This time 47 women addended the meeting including Elizabeth's 13 year old daughter Elizabeth. An impressive sum of $59.60[139] was donated. There were two other Pixton women on the attendance roll: Rebecca and Martha Pixton.

Rebecca Pixton, of course, was Elizabeth's new sister-wife.[140] But who was Martha Pixton? It seems likely that she was Martha Silcock, the 18 year old daughter of Elizabeth and Robert's friends Jane and Nicholas Silcock, who had moved from Tooele to Riverton, which was then in Bishop Gardner's South Jordan Branch. If so, what was she doing at the meeting and why was she already being called Martha Pixton? It is well documented[141] that Martha Silcock and Robert were sealed the following January. In one transcription of Robert's autobiography an editorial comment[142] was inserted to the effect that Robert had announced to Martha a year before they were sealed that he would marry her, and then he "kept his word" when they were sealed January 25, 1869. Her presence at Elizabeth's Relief Society

---

[138] North Jordan Ward Relief society minutes, microfilm LR 4239 21 at Church History Library. All future references that I will make to Elizabeth's Relief Society meetings will be from this record or from Leeds Ward Relief Society minutes and records, microfilm LR 4796 14.

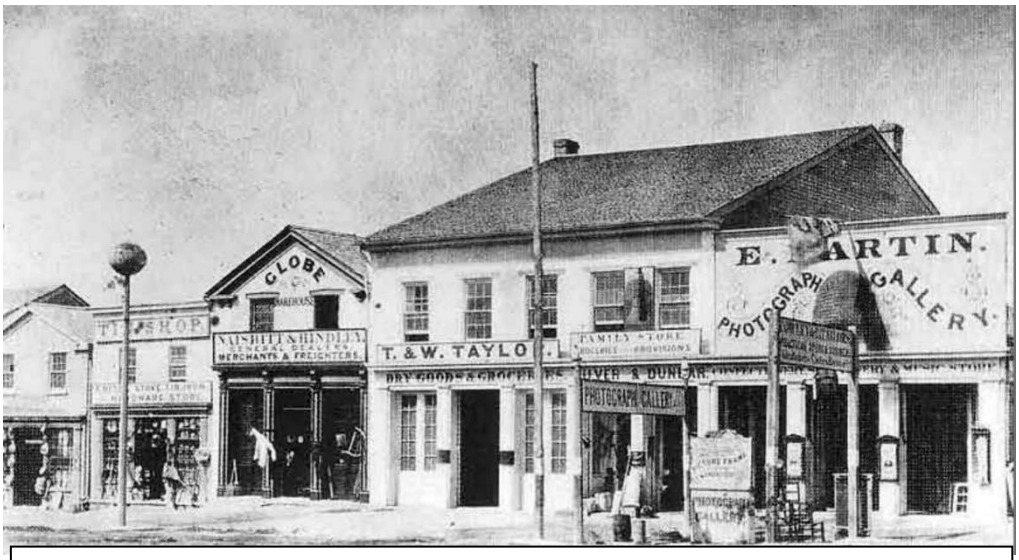
[139] Corrected for inflation this would amount to approximately $1,191 in 2022.

[140] Pixton family genealogists have surmised that Robert's marriage to Rebecca Savage was likely one of compassion to ensure a heavenly kingdom for Rebecca and did not actually involve cohabitation. The sealing was canceled before January 31, 1870, when Rebecca was sealed to David Jones Griffiths, and that sealing was canceled by Wilford Woodruff on October 18, 1897, to allow a third celestial marriage to Edmund Brooks. However, Rebecca's presence in Taylorsville two months after her sealing to Robert suggests that they might have lived together at least for a time.

[141] She gave her marriage date as 25 January 1869 on a genealogical form filled out in her own handwriting for: *Genealogical Surveys of LDS Members*, Salt Lake City, UT: Genealogical Society of Utah 1924-29, Vol. 24, p. 96. (Family History Library – LDS 289.3 G 286g). This date agrees with her endowment date. Her autobiography gives the same date.

[142] This transcription and editorial comment are thought to have been made by Jane Pixton Bowers, daughter of Robert and Martha. Jane was just two years old when Robert died, so her information would necessarily have been second hand.

meeting with the surname of Pixton suggests the possibility that by August she and Robert had already been married "for time" by their bishop.



The three stores on the Pixton property in 1868—the Globe Warehouse on the left, the building later known as Eagle House in the center, and Martin's Gallery. The tin shop on the far left is on property that Robert sold before his mission to Thomas Hawkins and Alfred Best.

Robert Pixton

According to his autobiography, Robert was called in the autumn of 1868 to the Dixie Mission to help settle the country but was unable to go until the next fall due to obligations to manage his properties in Salt Lake and Taylorsville. Among those management obligations was to sell one of his stores, the Globe warehouse, and the underlying land to Brigham Young on June 15, 1868, where Henry Naisbitt continued as a tenant. I would love to know the details of the deal, which took place just a few months before Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution was formed in order to compete with gentile businesses. Both Naisbitt and Taylor, the Pixtons' two tenants, signed up with ZCMI. On June 30, 1870, Brigham Young sold the property back to Robert for exactly the same price for which he had bought it.[143] By then Naisbitt had gone bankrupt, and his assets were bought out by his neighbor store T. and W. Taylor. Soon afterward Taylor bought out David Day a few doors to the north and moved out of the Eagle House, which opened the door to Robert and Elizabeth's successful long term relationship to Samuel Teasdel, as we will soon discover.

[143] A letter dated 8 November 1875 can be found the Church History Library concerning another potential land transaction with Brigham Young, MS 2183.

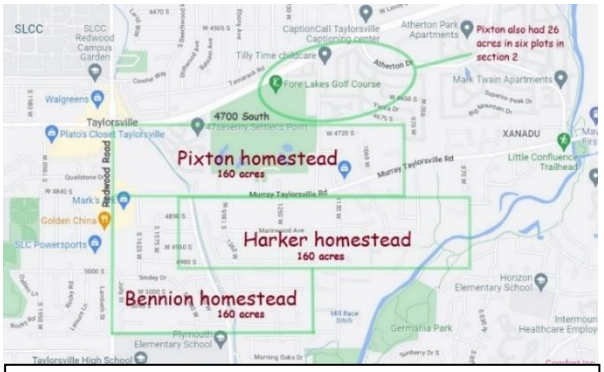
President Pixton

Elizabeth had her own obligations. The Relief Society was meeting approximately once a month. On October 13, 1868, the minutes reflected that $5.40 in donations had been collected and that sewing commenced at 11 o'clock. For the two previous weeks, considerable labor had been expended in spinning of yarn by some of the sisters. They were able to finish one quilt and nearly another. Sister Pixton gave the closing prayer, which was the usual role of the person in authority.

On January 25, 1869, Robert was sealed in the Endowment House to Martha Silcock by a member of the First Presidency, Daniel H. Wells, the sitting mayor of Salt Lake City, Major General of the Nauvoo Legion, and Robert's former boss years ago in public works. Martha lived for the next year with Elizabeth and the children in the Taylorsville house.

Martha Silcock Pixton

Bishop Gardner, Elder James Turner, and others of the brethren from the West Jordan Ward met again with Elizabeth's group of sisters to reorganize the Female Relief Society as "a branch in and of itself." What that means is not clear from the minutes, but it appears that the branch relief societies would now operate totally independently of each other. Elizabeth Pixton was made president of the North, or Lower Branch of the West Jordan Ward Female Relief Society with Mary Bennion and Alice Moses, a nurse who ran a boarding house, as counselors. Emma Bennion, Eliza Harker, and Mary H. Harker were to act as teachers, and Rachael Spencer as secretary.



The homesteads superimposed upon modern Google map of Taylorsville

On May 19, 1869, nine days after the connection of the transcontinental railway, Robert and his two closest neighbors, Joseph Harker and Samuel Bennion, went together to the U.S. Government Land Office in Salt Lake City to formally apply for homesteads under the Homestead Act of 1862 and to pay their registration fee of $16 each. Robert's patent was awarded November 26, 1872.[144]

Elizabeth Pixton (Jr.) 1867

Elizabeth remained president for the next three or four years until the Pixtons were called to colonize Dixie. The Relief Society met approximately once a month, collecting donations, holding lessons, and sewing. In August 1869 two sisters were appointed to visit the sick. Elizabeth Pixton Jr., four months shy of 17, and

[144] United States Bureau of Land Management Tract Books, Utah, vol 88.

Rebecca Mantle,[145] age 17, were appointed as teachers, and Mary Webster[146] to teach the young girls. Young Elizabeth turned out to be a devout worker in the Relief Society, where she taught for years, driving her horse and buggy from one end of the ward to the other. It was said of her that whenever she found sickness or want she always did her best to find help and relief, spending her own money and foodstuff. Her motto was "never let the left hand know what the right hand does," an attribute that was later aptly applied to her mother as well.

On October 15, 1869, Robert set out for Dixie to fulfill his calling from the previous year. He took his young bride Martha and Elizabeth's second son, 14 year old Willard, in a covered wagon drawn by one yoke of oxen and a span of horses. Eighteen year old Robert Jr. was left behind to take care of the family and the Taylorsville farm—he would turn 19 the following month. Elizabeth stayed behind with the younger children, preparing for the wedding to take place in three weeks of their daughter Elizabeth to Henry Harker, the son of the bishop and founder of the community. Joseph and Sariah were 10 and six.

Only bedding and provisions were taken along on the 13-day journey to Dixie. The Pixtons lived in St. George in a tent for three weeks before Robert decided to settle in Leeds[147] after exploring the area on horseback. Their first home was a dugout rented from the Bishop Benjamin Stringham, where they lived the first winter. When the Stringhams moved to Salt Lake later that year, Robert bought their house and moved into it.[148]

Jane Silcock, Martha Pixton's mother and Elizabeth's old friend, was called by Bishop Gardner to be Relief Society President of the South Jordan Branch in January 1870. They began holding meetings at her house. Jane wrote, "I made a few remarks on the promises and blessings God promised his people on the principle of obedience. We had a good meeting." She would serve for 16 years.

By then Rebecca, Robert Pixton's short-term wife number two, had already married again.

The Relief Society throughout the Church was gaining momentum. In February, with the assistance of Eliza R. Snow, Mary Isabella Horne founded the Ladies' Cooperative Retrenchment Society. Female leaders toured Utah Territory teaching women about retrenchment principles centered on simple, frugal clothing styles, home industry, and economic self-sufficiency. It was a separate organization from the Relief Society but closely aligned. On February 12 women's suffrage was adopted in Utah.

---

[145] In 1882 Rebecca married Feramorz Little, nephew and son-in-law to Brigham Young and the three term mayor of Salt Lake City beginning in 1876. She was an early graduate of the normal course of the University of Utah, became a professional teacher, and eventually became a Regent of the University, appointed by the state's first governor, Heber M. Wells. She was a patron of the National Council of Women and attendee of several of their sessions, also a member of the General Board of the Relief Society.

[146] Mary Webster arrived in Taylorsville from England in 1868, she and her husband buying a log home from Joseph Harker, a family friend from England. She was 31 at the time.

[147] In 1867 120 acres were surveyed into lots when water was diverted from the Harrisburg-Quail Creek Dam to Road Valley. Richard Ashby and John S. Harris lived in tents in the new townsite that winter. The town was organized as Bennington on December 1, 1867, with Benjamin Stringham as Presiding Elder, and in May 1869 the name was changed to Leeds in honor of Stringham's mission to the English city. Marietta M. Mariger, *Saga of Three Towns: Harrisburg, Leeds, Silver Reef*, Garfield County News, Panguitch, p.23.

[148] The house is still standing at 58 West Mulberry Road in Leeds.

Elizabeth Pixton

Elizabeth Pixton spoke to the North Jordan sisters in May on the necessity of building a small room for their meetings and in favor of carrying out the instructions from the retrenchment meeting. She was followed by sister Moses and Sister Bennion, who warned against speaking evil of neighbors behind their backs.

On June 1, 1870, Robert bought out Edward Martin's interest in his photography gallery and the store on the ground floor beneath it along with the accompanying outbuildings and fixtures, which Martin had built upon the Pixtons' property. Martin had gone out of business the preceding March. Two days later Brigham Young sold back the Globe Building at the exact price for which he had bought from Robert two years earlier, making all four of the stores available for rent. On June 4, 1870, an advertisement appeared in the *Deseret News* announcing the opening of a new store on Main Street, directly opposite the Salt Lake House, Salt Lake City's premier hotel owned by Brigham Young and his nephew Feramorz Little. The new store was located in Pixtons' Eagle House, and would be operated by Teasdel and Co., successors to William Jennings and Co. This was the building built by Robert Pixton with his inheritance money from England and the beginning of a long and successful relationship between the Pixtons and their new tenant.

Samuel P. Teasdel

Samuel P. Teasdel had immigrated from Suffolk, England in 1853 as the unmarried 21-year-old son of a schoolmaster and got a job in Salt Lake City as a store clerk. He was soon married to a girl from Wales by Bishop Hoagland in the 14th Ward, so he would have known the Pixtons before they moved to Taylorsville. During the next decade the young man worked his way up into a business partnership with William Jennings, Utah Territory's first millionaire.[149] Teasdel's name first appeared in the *Deseret News* in March 1868 announcing the partnership's re-opening of the Eagle Emporium, the deluxe general mercantile store on the southwest corner of Main and First South just north of Robert's downtown property, but in June, Teasdel was called on a mission to England. He returned after serving only a year to be appointed superintendent of the Ogden wholesale branch of ZCMI in June of 1869, and in August the partnership with Jennings to run the Eagle Emporium was dissolved "by mutual consent." The following winter after Teasdel's 4½ year old son died, he began to look for a business opportunity closer to his home in Salt Lake City. During all this time, Robert's buildings had been occupied, but they all came open just when Samuel Teasdel was looking for a spot to open his own store. Perhaps Robert was preparing the way for him, having recognized a good opportunity. On June 4, 1870, just days after Robert's buildings were vacated, an ad appeared in the *Deseret News* introducing Teasdel and Co., successors to Wm. Jennings and Co., now doing business at the Eagle House.[150] Teasdale would

[149] Jennings also lived in the 14th Ward.

[150] Possibly it was Teasdel who chose the name Eagle House to invoke his prior connection to the popular Eagle Emporium.

eventually run four stores rented from Pixtons—two in the in the Eagle House and one in the building on each side of it.

By July, Teasdel was advertising boots and shoes, dry goods, clothing, hardware, and groceries. In August the newspaper reported that Brother Robert Patrick, a 37 year old carpenter, got hurt falling from the roof in the rear of Teasdel's store, a sign that the Eagle House was being improved. Samuel Teasdel and the Pixtons would be in business together for the rest of their lives.

Martha Pixton's first child, Alma, was born on July 1, 1870, in Leeds, but only lived for 19 days before dying of "bed fever." Martha almost died of the fever at the same time. Robert wrote that during that year his time was divided between Salt Lake, Taylorsville, and Dixie "to keep the three places in order." I do not know whether he was in attendance for Alma's birth and death, but the U.S. census in Leeds that summer, enumerated on July 9, showed only Martha and Willard Pixton, ages 18 and 16.[151] It is painful to imagine the two teenagers experiencing this event alone.

Robert was in Taylorsville when the census was counted there on September 2, wherein he listed the worth of his property at $2,500.[152] Robert was 52 years old, and Elizabeth was listed as 50. Robert Jr. was 20. Willard was counted in both places, having left Leeds after being counted there. Joseph was now 12, and Sariah, the baby of the family, was eight.

Two months later, Robert Pixton took another wife named Lucy Stringfellow, a 71 year old widow two decades his senior,[153] whom he must have known during his time in Mansfield on his mission. Lucy and three of her adult children had arrived in Utah Territory on September 20, 1864 after she had nearly died on the pioneer trail. Her children were prosperous in England and in Salt Lake City, so it does not seem likely that the marriage was to provide economic support to the widow, but rather to ensure that she was sealed to a righteous man, her husband having died before the family became Mormons. It seems unlikely that Lucy and Robert ever lived together. She was living with one of her daughters in Draper at the time of the 1880 census and died there in March 1881.

In November 1870 Charlotte and William Van Dyke moved from Plain City to Ogden.

The Relief Society met at Elizabeth's house that December, producing exceptionally long minutes. Several new names were submitted and approved for membership. Elizabeth spoke formally to the group, declaring that she felt well in this society and saw an improvement, and would try and do all the good she could, expressing great satisfaction in visiting the societies in the city. She sustained the principle of cooperation, which was the duty of all, and advised the women to be very particular in not

---

[151] The census did not count the infant Alma, who should have been alive on that day, which puts the dates into question.

[152] This was obviously an approximation but would have been about $55,000 in 2022 dollars.

[153] Lucy Stringfellow was a member of the Church in Mansfield while he was serving there in 1862. The four youngest of her eight children were Mormons. The first to join the Mormons had been her youngest child George, who joined at the age of 14 in 1848 and served as a traveling elder in the Nottingham conference for several years before going into business in a silk factory with several hundred employees. Another son, Samuel, joined in 1856, and was the first of the family to immigrate to the Valley in 1862. Lucy had always been a religious person, but probably joined later than her sons if the story is true that she was baptized by the apostle George Q. Cannon, who began his European mission in 1860. Her sons became successful merchants known as Stringfellow Brothers with a Main Street store on lot six, just north of the Pixton property. Lucy died in Draper at the age of 81 three weeks after Robert Pixton's death.

trading with outsiders.[154] Several sisters arose and spoke spiritedly, "holding forth cooperation, obedience to authority, the instruction of children, sustaining the words of wisdom and manifesting a disposition to do what was right continually, deprecating back biting and inciting each other to unity of action." They met at Elizabeth's house again on January 10, 1871, adding more new members, and considered the financial report for the previous year. The amount received by the society was $210.85, property on hand, $159.19. They had supported the schoolhouse, the Perpetual Immigration Fund, and primarily, welfare to persons in the ward.

On April 4, 1871, Robert Pixton Jr. married Amelia Melissa Atwood.[155]

Edward Martin sold the entire west half of lot 7 for $13,000 to Francis Clift on December 11, 1871.

During Robert's second winter in Leeds, he rented a frame shack from Oscar Young while he built a rock house of two stories on a three acre plot and bought 10 acres for sugar cane and fruit trees. Sometime that winter, Robert and Martha took in a fourteen year old orphaned girl named Emily Hampton.[156] After Emily's mother died in England, her father brought her and four sisters to Zion on the new railroad, but was killed February 2, 1872 in an avalanche in Parley's Canyon while cutting logs for their home. Their bishop placed the four youngest girls in foster homes. Emily lived with the Pixtons for over three years until she married Elijah Thomas, a 23 year old farm boy from Leeds in December 1875, whom she met two years earlier while playing games with Sariah Pixton.

Emily Hampton

In one transcription of the autobiography that Robert dictated in his later years,[157] Robert stated that he served as a special missionary visiting the settlements enroute and making reports to Church Headquarters as he traveled between Salt Lake and Dixie. Elizabeth is said to have accompanied him to Leeds several times during that period to take advantage of the Dixie climate, which may explain why Sariah was in Leeds to befriend Emily Hampton as early as 1873.

The Relief Society in Taylorsville was meeting monthly, sometimes at Elizabeth's house or the house of one of her counselors, and often at the schoolhouse. Elizabeth was still expressing the need for a meeting room of their own. In August Robert Pixton addressed the group in the schoolhouse, a rare mention of any man in the minutes since their initial organization. He thought the sisters had done a great deal of good. It would do the sisters good to visit the meetings in the city. He counseled them to be faithful and diligent in carrying out the counsel they receive. Twenty-three members were reported attending in September. In every meeting that fall encouragement was given to attend the

---

[154] October 9, 1868 is when Brigham Young organized ZCMI.

[155] They are my 2nd great grandparents.

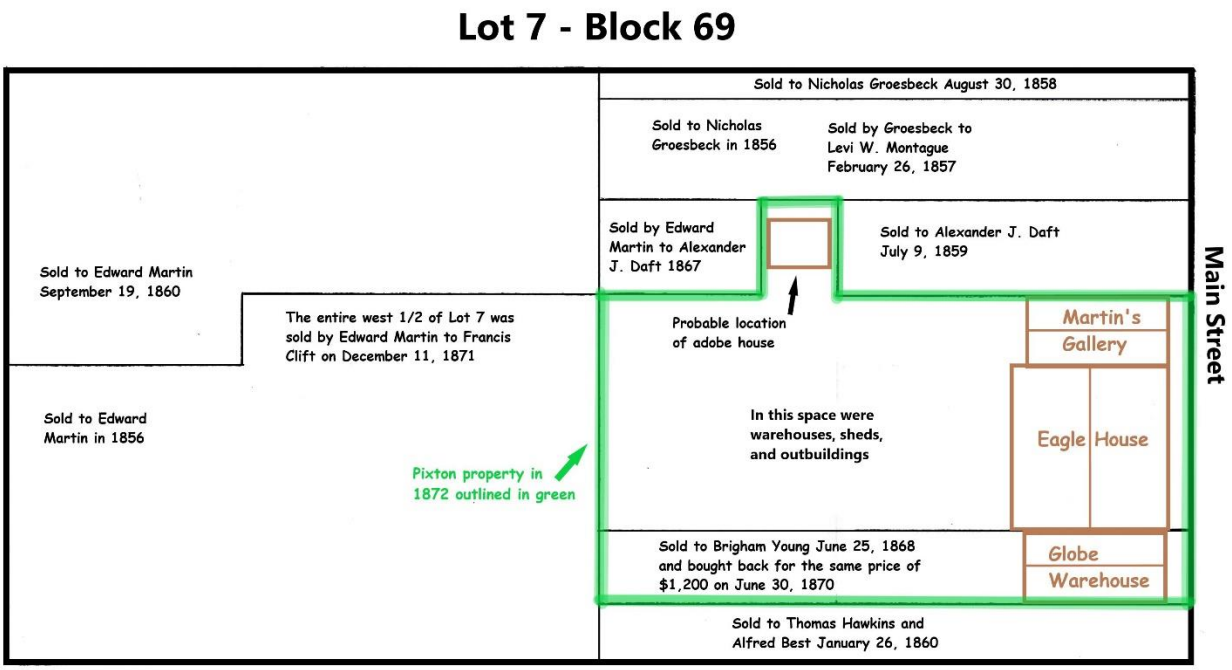
[156] See FamilySearch, Emily Hampton KW8R-S63, Stories.

[157] FamilySearch, Robert Pixton KWNV-ZVN, Memories, contributed March 18, 2022, by Kelly G. Vest. According to Kelly, this transcription was provided to him by Darlene Pixton with the following comment: "It should be noted that this report has been matched to the actual Robert Pixton Journal and *data left out has been added, along with other data researched and inserted by Lucile Pixton.* (italics mine.)" Thus it is possible that this is merely family tradition. Darlene and Lucile are granddaughters of Mary Janetta Bateman and Robert Simeon Pixton.

retrenchment meetings. Among the new members introduced in December was Amanda Pixton, the new wife of Robert Jr.

In January 1872 an article appeared in the *Salt Lake Daily Revue* accusing William Jennings, who backed Teasdel's store, of supporting ZCMI in order to freeze out gentile merchants.

A probate court action was filed against Robert in which Alfred Best and Edward Martin challenged the boundaries of the Pixton properties. This appears to have been a disagreement about inches and the use of alleyways, and it was settled favorably for Robert and Elizabeth although it took nearly two years to resolve. It ended with Robert receiving a clear title to his property with minimal changes. The extent and dimensions of the Salt Lake property remained unchanged for the next 26 years. The details of this legal process give a useful window into his property history.


Lot 7 - Block 69
Sold to Nicholas Groesbeck August 30, 1858
Sold to Nicholas Groesbeck in 1856
Sold by Groesbeck to Levi W. Montague February 26, 1857
Sold by Edward Martin to Alexander J. Daft 1867
Sold to Alexander J. Daft July 9, 1859
Sold to Edward Martin September 19, 1860
The entire west 1/2 of Lot 7 was sold by Edward Martin to Francis Clift on December 11, 1871
Probable location of adobe house
Martin's Gallery
Eagle House
Sold to Edward Martin in 1856
In this space were warehouses, sheds, and outbuildings
Pixton property in 1872 outlined in green
Sold to Brigham Young June 25, 1868 and bought back for the same price of $1,200 on June 30, 1870
Globe Warehouse
Sold to Thomas Hawkins and Alfred Best January 26, 1860
Main Street

Mary Bennion

In May, Elizabeth's friend and first counselor Mary Bushell Bennion died of typhoid fever.[158] There were 39 sisters at the next Relief Society meeting. Mary Ann Webster was chosen to replace Mary Bennion. In July the *Woman's Exponent* magazine was established by the Relief Society. In August, Elizabeth spoke on learning physiology and health "that we might have our own nurses and physicians."

Martha Pixton's second child was born in Leeds on September 3. Little Nellie would live only two years before dying of whooping cough. On November 26, 1872, a notation was made in the Salt Lake Land Office tract book, that Robert

[158] Despite her husband Samuel's conversion to Mormonism a year after their marriage in 1839 and immigrating to America with him, suffering in Garden Grove, and crossing the plains in 1847, Mary had clung to her Methodist faith until being baptized by Bishop Hoagland in the 14th Ward in 1857.

Pixton's homestead patent had been awarded.[159] His Taylorsville property was secure.

At a Relief Society meeting in December the end of year report was presented, which showed that $93.99 had been raised of which $10 had gone to the Perpetual Immigration Fund, $10 to "Miss E. R. Snow," $1.80 to poor persons, $9.60 in expenses, leaving a balance of $64.59. Elizabeth spoke on visiting the sisters and taught that the poor in the branch should be helped when necessary. Zina Young, wife of the Prophet and counselor to Eliza R. Snow, visited Elizabeth's Relief Society and gave an address to the sisters, exhorting improvement. "Sister Eliza will discover our improvement. Sustain your president. Emma (Smith) was chosen and elected, that's why she is the Elect Lady." The minutes report that "Sis. S. Kimball was the next speaker. Study physiology. Sister P.L. Kimball spoke.[160] The men were present, some of them spoke."

In her August Relief Society meeting, Elizabeth spoke again on the need of the society for a building of their own. She thought more sisters would attend. The Relief Society teachers were meeting together periodically. Bad weather limited the meeting in October to only eight women, but $1.45 in cash and $11.30 in merchandise was donated, of which Elizabeth herself contributed $9.60. That was a pattern with her—to always make the largest contribution.

Elizabeth announced sadly on December 9, 1873, that she had been called upon to part with the sisters. She had broken up her home a number of times before she said, but never under such peculiar circumstances. She would be moving to Leeds. Elizabeth left her testimony with the sisters and asked them to be faithful and the Lord would bless them. Her counselor Mary Ann Webster conducted meetings until the society was reorganized in April and Eliza Spencer became the new president.

Leeds was about 18 miles north of St. George and less than two miles from a rowdy boomtown at the Silver Creek mine, which served as a market for the farm products of the Mormon families in Leeds but was a bad influence on the young people. Robert had orchards and was successfully raising grapes and producing wine and vinegar. He may also have operated a store there.[161] Martha had been living in Leeds for over four years and was living in the rock house that Robert built around 1871. In the probate assessment of Leeds property after Robert's death there was also a frame house on the same block built on a separate one-acre lot, so I presume that the two families lived close to each other but in separate houses, with Elizabeth in the lumber dwelling. Leeds was a branch of the nearby Harrisburg Ward, and it was growing as families moved from Harrisburg to Leeds to take advantage of better irrigation opportunities.

Little has been written about Elizabeth's initial two years in Dixie. When she arrived early in 1874 her two oldest children were married and did not accompany her. Her next oldest, 20 year old Willard, probably went with them if he was not already there, since soon thereafter he found his eventual wife,

---

[159] Federal GLO records give May 5, 1874, as the patent date. Perhaps that was when the federal paperwork was completed in Washington.

[160] S. Kimball and P. L. Kimball were probably Sarah Ann Whitney and Presendia Lathrop Kimball, two of Heber C. Kimball's 43 wives. Presendia was Zina Young's sister and all three had been wives of Joseph Smith.

[161] This is according to the biography in FamilySearch of Isabella, Willard Pixton's wife. If he had a store, he probably got the inventory from Samuel Teasdale. There was no store inventory listed among his possessions in Leeds when he died, so if a store existed, it was not likely operating in 1881.

Isabella Carter[162] at a ward dance in St. George. Joseph was 15 and Sariah was 11. Martha was taking care of her only child Nellie, who was about 16 months old.

In the spring of 1875, the ward began building a stone meetinghouse/schoolhouse of 23 x 36 feet, which was completed in 1878. Willis D. Fuller was acting bishop from 1875 to 1876. On June 20, 1875, Seth Silcock Pixton was born to Martha, and three months later is when his sister Nellie died.

From its inception in December 1867 when Benjamin Stringham, who had moved from Harrisburg, was named presiding elder, Leeds had been a dependent branch. But in December 1875 a young Norwegian named Goudy Hogan was named acting bishop at Leeds and Harrisburg. He had arrived in Leeds a year earlier from Cache Valley on a mission to settle Dixie.

Bishop Goudy Hogan

Willard Pixton and Isabella Carter left sunny Dixie for wintery Salt Lake City in January to be married in the Endowment House after which they returned to live in Leeds until Willard could build them a permanent house in Taylorsville.[163]

Esther Busby Ashby

On May 4, 1876, the new bishop organized a Relief Society in his new Leeds Ward with Elizabeth Pixton as president. Zina Young and Eliza Smoot were there from Salt Lake City for the occasion.[164] Elizabeth's counselors were Esther Ashby, whose daughter Emma later married Joseph Cooper Pixton, and Ann Hogan, the bishop's wife, with Nancy Harris as treasurer. Martha Pixton was made secretary. There were initially only five members, but soon four more were added. Following Elizabeth's pattern in North Jordan, Relief Society meetings were held monthly at first, and all the meetings were work meetings.[165] Meetings were held on the first Thursday of each month. A member of the bishopric attended each meeting. It is not known who the counselors to Bishop Hogan were. From Martha's minutes it is clear that Robert was sometimes present, so perhaps he was one of them.

Elizabeth left Leeds for an extended time around the end of May 1876, probably to attend the births of two of her grandchildren, Tacy Enid, the third child of Robert Jr. and Amelia, and Elizabeth Jr.'s daughter Rosezella. Sister Ashby uneasily conducted the June meeting, asking the sisters to remember that if she did not act as old as Sister Pixton, it was because she had not had the experience. Robert remained in

---

[162] Isabella's parents William Carter and Harriet Utley lived in the Salt Lake 14th ward at the same time as the Pixtons and would have known them well.

[163] Willard built Isabella a home with two brick rooms southwest of the old Pixton home into which they moved in the autumn of 1879.

[164] This is according to the biography of Anna C. Angell, at whose house the Relief Society leaders stayed.

[165] Marietta M. Mariger, *Saga of Three Towns: Harrisburg, Leeds, Silver Reef*, Garfield County News, Panguitch, p. 24, 25.

Leeds that summer, showing up in the August Relief Society minutes as having given the prayer, and Sister Ashby continued to preside at the meetings at least through October.[166]

When Elizabeth returned they met twice a month and then weekly. All the surrounding towns were actively involved in the St. George Temple project. Construction workers worked every tenth day without pay as tithing. Others gave food, clothing, and other goods. Women decorated the hallways with handmade rag carpets and produced fringe for the altars and pulpits from Utah-produced silk.

There was a private dedication of the St. George Temple on January 1, 1877, which included local church authorities and Brigham Young with the Quorum of the Twelve. In his biography Bishop Hogan wrote of attending it, but the Pixtons probably were not invited. There is little doubt that they were present for the public dedication of the temple on April 5 during which General Conference was held in the building. The Pixtons would have witnessed Brigham Young's fiery celebratory speech in which he smote the stand with his walking stick, making a mark which would in time be seen by thousands. Upon hearing that Goudy Hogan, the acting bishop of Leeds, had not been formally set apart, Brigham and his son Brigham Young Jr. laid their hands on his head and accomplished it. That day Bishop Hogan wrote a letter to Brigham suggesting that all families with young children should be transferred from Leeds to Orderville to insulate them from the evils of neighboring Silver Creek, and that the two towns together unite in the United Order. Brigham agreed, and by June the former Leeds bishop was living with several Leeds families in Orderville, and the economic structure of Leeds was upended. Brigham did not ever learn the outcome of Bishop Hogan's idea because the Prophet died in Salt Lake City on August 29, possibly of a ruptured appendix. Over 12,000 people attended his funeral at the Tabernacle. By September Bishop Hogan was on his way to Europe on a mission.

Shortly after the temple dedication, Willard and Isabella's first child, Willard Carter Pixton, was born in Leeds on April 13. Elizabeth was there for the birth[167] but was also very busy in the new temple, the first to operate in the Church since the Pixtons left Nauvoo 31 years earlier in 1846. She and Robert had a lot of pent up temple work to get done. They and possibly their younger children were in the new temple on April 17 to stand in for the proxy baptisms of Elizabeth's parents, her two grandmothers, and her older brother Francis.[168] Robert's parents and his paternal grandfather were also baptized that day as well as his brother George, and Robert's parents received their initiatory work and endowments. The next day Robert's parents were vicariously sealed in marriage. On April 19 his paternal grandparents were endowed, and Elizabeth's parents were sealed to each other. Four weeks later Robert's brother George Pixton was vicariously endowed. On May 16, 1877, their 14 year old daughter Sariah received her own endowment.

In December George Crosby became the bishop in Leeds. His counselors were Joseph T. Wilkinson and Alma T. Angell.

---

[166] Unfortunately, the next two years of the Leeds Relief Society record are missing until October 1848.

[167] Isabella's biography states that her mother-in-law was present for the births of her first two children in Taylorsville. This was probably a typographical error. Elizabeth did attend Isabella's births, but the first two were in Leeds. In an earlier paragraph the biography correctly states that Willard lived in Leeds until he was 26 and later that the family moved to Taylorsville in the autumn of 1879.

[168] Baptism for two of Elizabeth's sisters who died before the age of eight was unnecessary and Anne was still living. I do not know why proxy baptisms for her grandfathers are not recorded.

Sometime in 1878 Elizabeth returned to her home in Taylorsville for an extended time during which the wives of the bishop's counselors, Anna C. Angell and Anna M. Wilkinson, were appointed to lead the Relief Society meetings in Leeds,[169] but she was back by October when she read aloud a letter written on behalf of Sister Ann Hogan, who wished to be honorably released as second counselor as she was permanently in Orderville. In November after a prayer by Bishop Crosby, the year-end report was read. Sister Pixton spoke at length to the sisters. Brother Crosby spoke encouragingly, and his wife was chosen by the sisters as second counselor. Sister Anna Angel was appointed president of the teachers, and some of the sisters addressed the meeting for a short time. Brother Crosby gave the closing prayer. Elizabeth missed the December meeting for the birth of granddaughters two weeks apart: Charlotte (Lottie) Hallat to Elizabeth and Henry Harker and Elizabeth Cooper born to Robert Jr.'s wife Amelia, but she was back in Leeds for the next meeting. Interestingly, both of those children's names referenced their grandmother.

The sisters met monthly through March 1879 with Elizabeth presiding each time and giving instruction. In January she read to them the minutes of a mass meeting she had attended in Salt Lake City. There was a new member in February, and in March there were nine members and one non-member present.

> Sister Pixton arose and addressed the meeting, and she gave some very good instructions after which a number of the sisters were called upon and they bore their testimony. A member was accepted. Sister Pixton dismissed the meeting.

Elizabeth Pixton

This is the last time that Elizabeth was mentioned in the minutes of the Leeds Relief Society, although she remained long enough to be present for Willard and Isabella's second child, Lafayette, on April 21, 1879. Relief Society was to have been held on April 20, but there were no minutes that day, suggesting that the meeting was cancelled. Elizabeth was gone for good by the May meeting, and the Leeds sisters promptly voted to hold meetings once a week. The minutes no longer contained instruction—every meeting was a work meeting, piecing patchwork, quilting, sewing. The attendance dropped to four or five sisters including Martha, who was still keeping the minutes.

It is hard to say that Robert ever returned from Leeds for good to live in Taylorsville. He was back and forth so much during this period that he must be considered to have been living in both places. But he wrote that he was not in Leeds on March 17, 1879, when Martha's child Jane Pixton was born. Elizabeth was not replaced as Relief Society president in Leeds until it was reorganized in May 1880 with Anna Marie Wilkinson as president and counselors Esther Ashby and Sarah B. Crosby. Martha Pixton was released and replaced by Helen McMullin as secretary.

---

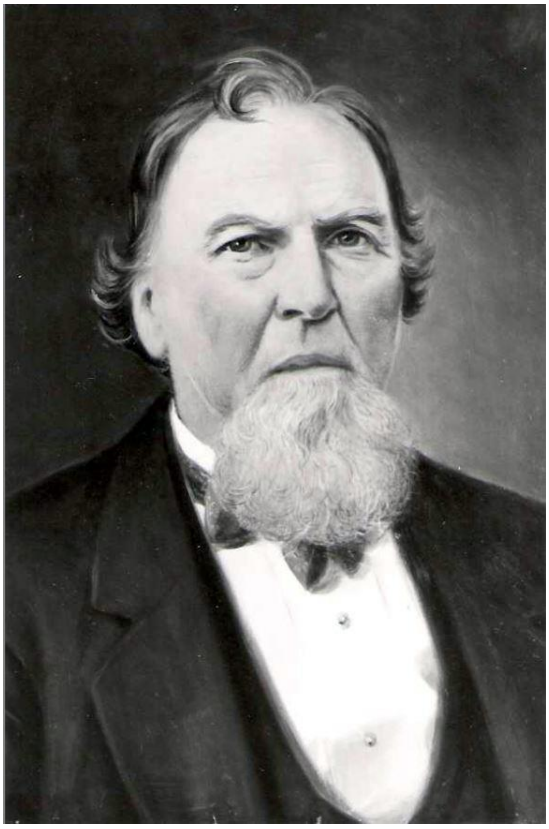
[169] Wilma Cox Beal, *Leeds Historical Events in Bits and Pieces*, available online at http://wchsutah.org/documents/beal-leeds-book.pdf and in the Washington County library (call Number M277.9248).

That year Eliza R. Snow was formally named General President of the Church Relief Society, the first to hold that title since Emma Smith.

Robert and Elizabeth were both in Taylorsville on June 21, 1880 according to the census, living next door to Robert's nephew Edward Pixton, who had immigrated from England. Elizabeth's youngest children, Joseph and Sariah, now 21 and 17 years old, were with them, but Willard and his young family were living in Leeds. Surprisingly,[170] Martha Pixton with her two children Seth and Jane were also living in Taylorsville during the census 20 houses away from Elizabeth and Robert and ten houses from Robert Pixton Jr. and his family.

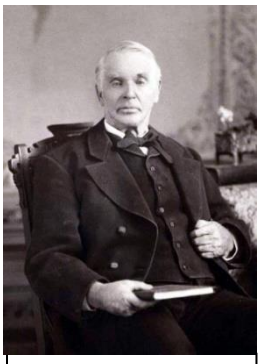
Robert Pixton Sr. died in Taylorsville November 23, 1881 in the adobe house he had built two decades earlier for Elizabeth at the bottom of the bluff west of the Jordan River. Like Brigham Young, Robert appears to have succumbed to a ruptured appendix, although the newspaper announcement of his death speculated that "his death was caused by indigestion, resulting from the fact that immediately after eating a hearty dinner, he went to work in a cellar which he was building, and had to bend very low." His funeral was held in the Salt Lake 14th Ward assembly room.

Once again he had left Elizabeth alone to deal with a death in the family, but this time he would not be coming back.



[170] This is surprising since Martha wrote in her autobiography that she lived in Leeds for 14 years beginning in 1869 and that all her children were born there including Olive on January 17, 1881. She was not likely simply visiting Taylorsville at the time of the census since she was living in a different house from her neighbors and fairly distant from Robert and Elizabeth.

Chapter Four – Life after Robert



Judge Elias Smith

Because Robert had died without a will, his large and complicated estate was managed, divided, and distributed by the territorial probate court of Elias Smith[171] which convened about six weeks after Robert's funeral. Elizabeth was executor, but on the grounds of her age and gender, she requested that two able men be appointed to assist her—Samuel Teasdel, who had by then rented her downtown properties for a decade, and her son-in-law William Van Dyke, Charlotte's husband. When the judge required each executor to post a formidable bond of $52,000 each, William withdrew, a decision that he may have later regretted. Elizabeth's bond was guaranteed by her former wagon train comrade, Horace Eldredge, who was now a prosperous Salt Lake City banker. Teasdel's former business partner William Jennings and Henry Dinwoody, the prominent furniture manufacturer,[172] signed his bond.

Judge Smith appointed assessors in both Salt Lake and Washington Counties to evaluate the holdings. The property on Main Street assessed at about $40,000 including $500 for the old adobe pioneer house. The holdings in Taylorsville included the homestead containing Elizabeth's adobe house worth $1,000 and twelve scattered parcels of land surrounding it. The stone house in Leeds which Robert had built for Martha was also valued at $1,000, and the frame house on the next lot was worth $500. Farm implements, wagons, and animals were evaluated. There were financial obligations to pay and an impressive list of investments to liquidate including shares in ZCMI, co-ops in Nephi, Spanish Fork, and West Jordan, the West Jordan Woolen Mills, and others. The most interesting asset in Leeds was a wine press and 560 gallons of wine, which were worth more than the frame house. Robert held almost $18,000 in cash. The total value of the estate was $79,561[173] of which about $4,000 was in Leeds.

Samuel Teasdel and Elizabeth, the executers, were ordered to liquidate what they could, pay all debts, and return in a year with an accounting to allow distribution of the property among the heirs, namely Elizabeth, her six living children--Charlotte, Robert, Elizabeth, Willard, Joseph, and Sariah, ages 32-20, and Martha's three children--Seth, Jane, and Olive, ages 7-1. Judge Smith ordered that $150 be paid to Elizabeth and $25 to each of Martha's children every month for living expenses pending the disposition of the estate. The court did not deem Martha Silcock Pixton an heir because she was not "legally" married to Robert, but since her children were minors she was given charge of their money.

For the rest of 1882 Elizabeth and Martha remained in their respective homes, supported by the allotment from the court.

That year the Relief Society established the Deseret Hospital.

---

[171] Elias Smith was a polygamist himself, a first cousin of Joseph Smith who had been appointed probate judge of Salt Lake County shortly after his arrival as a pioneer in 1851. He had been an assistant editor of the *Times and Seasons* and *Nauvoo Neighbor* in Nauvoo, business manager of the *Deseret News* from its onset and the editor after Willard Richards' death. The judge retired before the Pixton probate was settled in 1884.

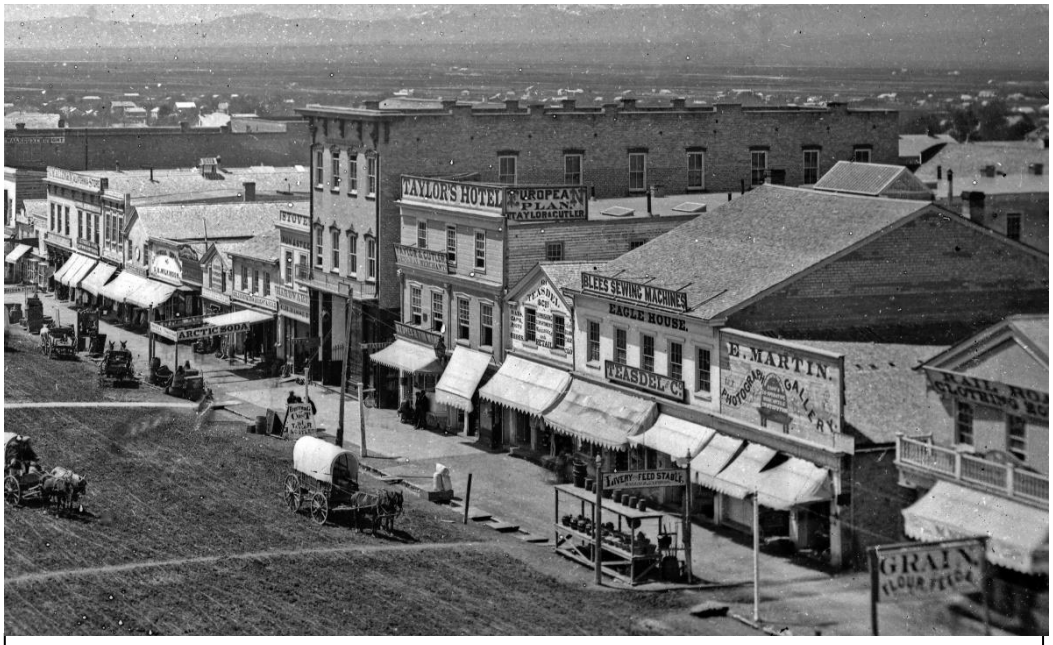
[172] Dinwoody was the grandfather of Harold D. Moyle.

[173] That would be about $2.2 million in 2022.

On March 22,1882 the Edmunds Act[174] was adopted in Congress, which disenfranchised polygamists, increased the opportunity for criminal convictions, and forbad polygamists from living with their illegal wives.

First Deseret Hospital

Teasdel's four stores ran weekly newspaper advertisements and operated side by side in the Pixton buildings selling among other things groceries, dry goods, clothing, and shoes. On June 21, an article appeared reporting the construction of a large warehouse in the rear of his premises, a significant addition to Teasdel's already extensive establishment. The stores were advertised individually, although all of them sold multiple products. Number one featured, groceries, number two, dress goods, number three, shoes, number four, men's suits, shoes, carpets, and more.



Teasdel's four stores including ground floor of Martin's Photo Gallery
Charles W. Carter glass negative, Church History Library PH 1300

The next day Jesse James was shot and killed in St. Louis by Robert Ford, making a national story. On June 17, 1882, Liberty Park formally opened in Salt Lake City. In August, Rudger Clawson, a 25 year old returned missionary, became the first person convicted for practicing polygamy. He was already a local celebrity, having been attacked three years earlier in Georgia by a mob who shot and killed his companion Joseph Standing. Clawson had defied the mob, daring them to shoot him, and then collected

[174] The more stringent Edmunds Tucker Act came later in 1887.

the body of Standing and brought it back for a public funeral in the tabernacle. His polygamy conviction landed him in prison for three years and he was fined $1,500.[175]

It was this fall in the St. George temple that Joseph Pixton, Elizabeth's youngest boy, married Emma Esther Ashby, the daughter of his mother's Relief Society counselor in Leeds.

On January 26, 1883, Elizabeth and Samuel Teasdel appeared before the Judge Smith to give their report. Several assets which had been deemed likely to depreciate had been sold—mostly animals and farm equipment totaling about $773. The estate had made the ordered monthly payments to Elizabeth and the three children in Leeds via Martha. They reported on the construction of Teasdel's warehouse. It had exceeded the $2,500 which Robert had already paid Teasdel by $953.25, so they deducted it from the estate. After payment of bills, there remained $30,268 in hand. The income included many rent payments from Teasdel, dividends from ZCMI, West Jordan Woolen Mills, and other investments and payments from private loans to Nicholas Silcock, Michael Earl,[176] B. G. McMillen, Archibald Gardner, and G. H. Crosby.

A formula was determined for division of the estate. Elizabeth was to receive a quarter of it for the duration of her life, and each of the children (or if dead, their issue) one ninth of the remaining three quarters. The $30,000 at hand was distributed immediately so that Elizabeth received $7,500 and each of the children $2,500. The income sparked three new endeavors for Elizabeth.

First, on Robert's birthday February 27, she began a practice of holding a party. One of her biographers, Mary J. B. Pixton[177] wrote,

> She loved to entertain…. Her children, grandchildren, and old friends were all invited. At these parties she would sing for us. She loved to sing, she also loved to dance and entered the church or hall in a dignified…and queenly manner.

Sariah Pixton

Second, Elizabeth ordered the construction of a comfortable two-story brick home for herself atop the hill above the old adobe house.

And on April 24, 1883, she set out for England with her only unmarried child, 20 year old Sariah, with whom she had been pregnant when Robert visited her family on his mission. They stayed in England five months. Elizabeth later wrote that she did a great amount of genealogy there and

[175] Rudger Clawson was called to be an apostle in October General Conference by Lorenzo Snow in 1898 and became president of the quorum in 1921. Upon his death in 1943, two vacancies were filled by Spencer W. Kimball and Ezra Taft Benson.

[176] Michael was a tailor who probably rented part of one of the Pixton buildings. George Henry Crosby had been a bishop in Leeds. "B. G. McMillen" was probably Brigham Young McMullen, a colonizer and businessman in Leeds. Archibald Gardner owned Gardner's Mill and was bishop in West Jordan.

[177] Several brief biographies have been written for Elizabeth Cooper Pixton, but this is the one that I prefer. Mary Janetta Bateman was a daughter of Marinda Bateman, who had nominated Elizabeth as Relief Society president of the North Jordan Branch. Elizabeth was in her first term as president when Janetta was born, and Janetta was 20 when Elizabeth began her second term as Relief Society president in 1891. Janetta had been married to Elizabeth's grandson, Robert Simeon Pixton, for eight years before Elizabeth died, so she was an eyewitness to much of Elizabeth's later life.

later did temple work for “a great many relatives and friends” in the St. George and Salt Lake Temples.

Three weeks after Elizabeth and Sariah departed, Martha Silcock left Leeds and returned to live in Riverton near her parents, where she reared her three children. She lived there 14 years, and then moved to Salt Lake City.

Elizabeth evidently did not write a journal while she was in England. Since she was doing genealogical research, she must surely have kept written notes, but none have survived, nor have any letters home. Still, much can be inferred about her visit.

She had been away from England for nearly four decades. Like Robert twenty years earlier, she and Sariah probably began their visit by looking up her Aunt Mary Wrigley. There was a lot of catching up to do.

Elizabeth Wrigley Rose

Before Elizabeth departed for America in the fall of 1843 with three year old Charlotte, she lived close to the Wrigleys’ house in Salford. With Robert gone she would have relied on her aunt and uncle for support and was close to their two remaining children, both of whom Elizabeth had tended as a nursemaid. Joseph Jr. was 17 when she left England, and their daughter Elizabeth Wrigley was seven. By the time Robert visited the Wrigleys on his mission in 1862, much had changed with their family. Joseph Jr. had died of consumption at the age of 23. Their daughter Elizabeth was no longer living with them and married George Blackburn just two months after Robert’s arrival. The newlyweds traveled to South America[178] but were back in Salford with a baby girl before Robert’s mission ended in 1865. When Elizabeth Blackburn was a month from delivering her second child, her husband suddenly died in Essex, where he had been away working. When her father Joseph Wrigley died a year later, the two widows lived together with Elizabeth’s two children, Mary Elizabeth and George, in New Brighton just across the River Mersey from Liverpool, where Elizabeth was a housekeeper and her mother Mary Wrigley worked as an accountant at age 69. In 1874 Mary Hallet Wrigley moved back to her birthplace in Barlow to live with her widowed sister, Elizabeth Margerisson, when Elizabeth Blackburn married a bookkeeper named William Rose, a widower with two children.

William Rose

When Elizabeth Pixton arrived with Sariah in April 1883 her cousin Elizabeth Blackburn Rose was living in Southport, a coastal town 21 miles north of Liverpool, where her second husband was working as a bookkeeper. She had four children living with her—one of his, a girl named Elizabeth Ann age 19, two of hers, Mary Elizabeth age 17 and George 16, and one of theirs, Ernest, age seven. There is no doubt that Elizabeth and Sariah Pixton spent enough time with the Rose family that summer to forge a meaningful relationship, for several members of that family later ended up immigrating to Utah.

[178] This is according to Robert’s missionary journal at the time. I have not been able to verify it with travel records.

Mary Hallat Wrigley

Elizabeth must have spent significant time with her Aunt Mary Wrigley. Aunt Elizabeth Margerisson had died two years earlier, so it is not clear whether Mary Wrigley was still living in the house the sisters had shared in Barlow or had moved back to Lancashire. Since Elizabeth Pixton's goal was to do genealogical work, she must have spent considerable time in Barlow and Chesterfield, where she would have visited her parent's graves. Years later she told of being led to her relatives by strangers when she did not know their names.[179]

Another priority for Elizabeth would have been to visit her younger sister Anne, whom Robert also visited in 1862 shortly after arrival on his mission. Anne's husband at that time, George Holgate, died in 1869, but in 1873 she married a widower named Joseph Riley, a warehouse man in Salford. When Elizabeth and Sariah visited her, Anne was 60 years old.[180] She had three daughters, at least one of whom was living in Manchester in 1883, the oldest, also named Anne, who was married to a shoemaker named Frederick Artist Smith and had three children under four.

Elizabeth would also have visited her Cooper relatives, especially the two teenage aunts with whom she lived in her grandmother Cooper's house in Chesterfield before moving to Salford. One of them, Martha Cooper Vosper, the youngest sister of Elizabeth's father, was a 70 year old widow living in Salford with her son Thomas, who was a clerk in the gas department, and his wife Alice. Like Elizabeth, Martha Vosper was living off the dividends of her husband's estate—he had been a grocer. She was the only sibling of Elizabeth's father who was still alive. The other Cooper aunt, Sarah Joell, had died several years earlier at the age of 64.

It seems likely that Elizabeth would have visited some of Robert's relatives as well, but none of Robert's siblings were still living.[181] Edward, a son of Robert's oldest brother John Pixton, had immigrated to Utah around 1880 and was living next door to Robert and Elizabeth with his wife Sarah and three children, Alfred, Joseph, and Sarah Jane at the time of the census that year.[182]

While Elizabeth and Sariah were still in England the volcano Krakatoa erupted, darkening the atmosphere around the world, which must have made an impression on them. In England, the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins described skies of green, blue, gold, and purple, "… more like inflamed flesh

---

[179] Granite Stake Relief Society minutes and records, Granite officers meeting, August 31, 1901, Church History Library LR 3379 14.

[180] The last direct evidence that I have of Anne is the 1881 census, but I am quite certain that she died sometime after September 17, 1898 when Elizabeth arranged to have herself and all her deceased siblings sealed to their parents. Anne was omitted, which suggests that she was still alive at that time.

[181] Only a small fraction of the temple work that Elizabeth did for deceased relatives after her return from England was on the Pixton line. She did see to the vicarious endowment of Robert's mother Mary Hankinson and the sealing of Robert and two of his four siblings who lived to adulthood to their parents on January 1, 1889.

[182] Edward was found dead at the age of 41 at a construction site five months later, apparently having frozen to death after getting drunk. *Salt Lake Herald,* November 25, 1880. Temple records in FamilySearch show that Edward Pixton was baptized August 5, 1880, along with his nine year old daughter Sarah Jane and posthumously sealed to his wife Sarah on June 8, 1882. His son Alfred was baptized at the age of 15 on November 23, 1879. His wife and three children moved to California before 1883.

than the lucid reds of ordinary sunsets … the glow is intense; that is what strikes everyone; it has prolonged the daylight, and optically changed the season; it bathes the whole sky, it is mistaken for the reflection of a great fire."[183] Of course, the eruption affected the entire world including Utah, yielding spectacular sunsets for months. The skies darkened and the weather cooled for years afterwards.

Elizabeth sent a telegram to Samuel Teasdel on September 12 informing him that they had arrived safely in New York City, so they could not have been home much more than two weeks when Sariah was married in Taylorsville on October 4, 1883[184] to a 20 year old man from the Salt Lake 14th Ward named William Lee Dykes. Obviously the couple knew each other before Elizabeth's trip to England, but perhaps not well enough. William had fathered a five month old son named William Lee Dykes, Jr., who was born May 5, 1883, just two weeks after Sariah left for England. The mother was Emily Platts, a daughter of a British-born stonemason in the Salt Lake 19th Ward. It is hard to determine whether Dykes was a polygamist, a bigamist, or had simply fathered a child out of wedlock. Undocumented dates for his marriage to Emily range from May 5, 1882 to August 12, 1888, which could support any of these possibilities. Emily stated in the 1900 census that she had been married for 16 years, which suggests that the couple got married around 1884.

William Dykes was raised mostly by his grandmother, Sarah Anne Cooke, in Salt Lake City while his father tried his hand at colonizing in Dixie. The family called him Willie. He was an intelligent student but didn't like school. When he was 11 he ran away for a week or two after being whipped for truancy and found a job "over Jordan" tending animals (possibly in Taylorsville), before coming home when he got hungry enough. His father was a miner who spent too much time at the gaming table. William's mother encouraged the family to move to Toquerville, hoping in vain to straighten Willie's father out. During the Dykes family's two years in Toquerville it is possible that Willie could have known Sariah when they were children. His parents ended up separating and his mother returned with all the children except Willie to Grandma Cooke in Salt Lake in October 1876. Thirteen year old Willie followed a week later, driving the family's wagon home by himself. He attended the 14th Ward school from the winter of 1877 to 1880.

Sariah was pregnant by December 1883 when the probate court for her father's estate met again. The executors presented their annual report and publicized its intention to sell off certain items of personal property, as it was viewed to be a propitious time to sell Canaan Co-op stock and certain animals.

Among the expenses recorded by the Pixton estate was a payment of $60 for an unspecified reason to Sariah's new husband, W. L. Dykes, on February 4, 1884. He would be turning 21 in two weeks. In May, when Sariah was six weeks pregnant, Willie left the Pixtons to go to Eagle Rock, Idaho, later called Idaho Falls, which was then a wild railroad shanty town connecting the railroad to the copper mines at Butte, Montana. Eagle Rock was becoming a hotbed for homesteading in the Snake River Valley. Willie never returned to Sariah.

1884 was an election year, and the big issue was polygamy, even outside Utah. At a special priesthood meeting at the April Conference, President John Taylor asked all monogamists serving in ward bishoprics or stake presidencies either to prepare to marry a plural wife or to offer their resignation from church

[183] Wikipedia, *Krakatoa*.

[184] The marriage is not documented in the North Jordan Ward records. The date and location are from the documentation of their divorce. See Sariah's memories in FamilySearch.

office, and he called out the names of monogamous stake presidents. The Logan Temple was dedicated by President Taylor on May 17. Over the next few years Salt Lake people flocked to Logan to be sealed to their children not born in the covenant, an ordinance that had not been available in the Endowment House. The first five Pixton children were in that category, but their time would not come for three more years.

On May 19, Elizabeth and Samuel Teasdel made another report to the probate court. The court recommended that $5,000 of the remaining cash be distributed and ordered Elizabeth to sell what she could at auction to liquidate the rest of the estate preparatory to a final settlement.

George Wrigley Blackburn, the oldest son of Elizabeth's cousin Elizabeth Rose, left England to settle in Utah[185] that summer and probably moved in with Elizabeth and her pregnant daughter Sariah or one of her children's families. His church record indicates that he was baptized at the age of 18, probably about a year after arriving.

A late claim was made on the Pixton estate by William Stirling[186] from whom Robert Pixton had borrowed $150 in 1878. On July 29th the judge ordered Elizabeth to convey to him several lots in Leeds.

Sariah's baby was born on August 25, 1884, according to the record of his blessing in the North Jordan Ward records. He was given the name of William Pixton Dykes by Bishop Joseph Harker, who blessed him on September 2.

The polygamy issue did not let up after the elections of 1884. In February 1885 John Taylor went "underground" to avoid arrest. The speakers at General Conference, which had been delayed until May, were mostly sons of polygamist leaders whose fathers were in hiding, but Salt Lake Stake President Angus M. Cannon appeared and made a surprise speech. He had just been found guilty of cohabitation, facing sentencing the next Saturday, but didn't seem to fear it according to one attendee at the meeting.[187] The following Saturday, Federal Chief Justice Zanes ruled that even visiting one's wife outside her house constituted cohabitation and Cannon was sentenced to six months in prison and a fine of $900. At some point that year the Idaho test oath was instituted prohibiting not only polygamists but also any Mormon sympathizer from voting or holding administrative positions in Idaho. By 1886 the oath was required even of schoolteachers.

Sariah filed for divorce from William Dykes on May 8, 1885, on grounds of abandonment. When the Idaho sheriff looked for him in Eagle Rock to serve the complaint Willie had moved to Blackfoot. He did not show up for the divorce hearing and Sariah was granted custody of their child, who was by then nine months old. Willie returned in about a year to Emily Platts and lived with her until his untimely death at that age of 38 from influenza. They had five children.

Emily Platts

By February 28, 1886, all assets of the Pixton estate had been sold except the four stores rented to Samuel Teasdel. Elizabeth and Teasdel liquidated stock in a coal

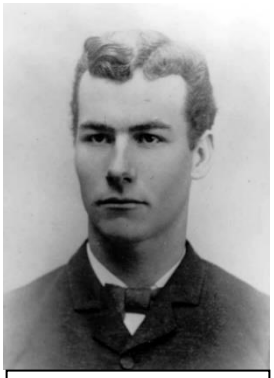
[185] George arrived in New York City on June 23, 1884, at the age of 17 aboard the ship *Arizona*, one of 902 passengers. He was listed as a farmer.

[186] Stirling was one of the original settlers of Leeds, a winemaker who may have helped Robert set up his own operation.

[187] Letter from Sarah Oakey to her parents in Dingle Idaho after attending the conference session.

company, ZCMI, Nephi Mills, the Spanish Fork Co-op, and sold 209 head of sheep, leaving a cash balance of $313, which was split among the children, each of whom received $1,116.67, and Elizabeth who got $3,350**.** The last meeting with the probate court was on April 8, 1886, when the court distributed the last of the cash balance of $491 among the heirs and declared that the estate had been fairly administered. The books were closed, and Elizabeth assumed sole ownership of the buildings on Main Street, which were producing about $500 a month[188] in rent.

On June 14, 1886, Elizabeth became an empty nester when Sariah married Henry Joseph Wheeler[189] in Taylorsville. Sariah was 23, and Henry was 20. They adopted Sariah's two year old child whom they called William Leo Wheeler and moved to Cottonwood, where Henry's family lived. Although Sariah had been endowed, she and Henry were apparently not married in a temple or in the Endowment House.



Henry J. Wheeler

The Edmunds Tucker Act became law on March 3, 1887, further increasing the pressure against polygamy. The act disincorporated both the Church and the Perpetual Emigration Fund, dissolving the Corporation of the Church and ordering the confiscation by the government of all church property valued over $50,000. It required an anti-polygamy oath for voters, jurors, and public officials and annulled territorial laws that allowed "illegitimate" children to inherit. Martha's children were lucky to have received their inheritance a year previously. It also replaced county probate judges such as Elias Smith with federal appointees. It also ended woman's suffrage in Utah, where women had enjoyed the right to vote since 1870.

John Taylor, president of the Church, died in July 1887 while still in hiding. Among the bodyguards who were present was Samuel Bateman, the husband of Marinda Bateman who had recommended Elizabeth as North Jordan Relief Society President in 1868. Samuel was a polygamist himself, also a fugitive, and became a bodyguard to Taylor's successor Wilford Woodruff.

That summer Samuel Teasdale began advertising in the *Woman's Exponent* for special women's items.

On November 11, 1887, Elizabeth made a trip to the temple in Logan where her children who had not been born under the covenant--Charlotte and Robert Jr. and her children who had died in childhood, George, Mary Elizabeth, Robert Helaman, and Sarah--were sealed in the Logan Temple to her and to Robert.

Elizabeth's cousin, 21 year old George Wrigley Blackburn, returned to England on a visit in 1888. Upon his return to Taylorsville, he found employment at the smelters in Murray for several years during which he took an active part in the ward organizations, especially dramatics, and became proficient in acting and entertaining in Taylorsville and the neighboring wards.

---

[188] This is the equivalent of $14,700 per month in 2022 dollars.

[189] Henry and Sariah are the founders of the historic Wheeler Farm, which has been listed on the National Register of Historical Places since 1976 situated on 75 acres in Murray. It was built in 1898 and according to the Biographical Record of Salt Lake City and Vicinity, 1902 it was "planned by Mrs. Wheeler and reflects great credit upon her knowledge of architecture…."

On May 6, 1888, Lisadore Wheeler was born to Sariah and Henry. Leo would have been nearly four. Two weeks later the Manti Temple was dedicated under the shadow of confiscation by the Federal Government through the Edmunds Tucker Act.

Elizabeth stepped up the temple work generated by her trip to England. The following is gleaned through analysis of the temple records in FamilySearch, which gives the dates, but not the proxies, for baptisms, endowments, and sealings. It appears that Elizabeth traveled to St. George to accomplish the following work over the next several months:

On January 2, 1889, Robert' mother, Mary Hankinson, was vicariously endowed in the St. George Temple, and Robert and the two of his four siblings who lived to adulthood were sealed to her and their father.[190] This is the only work that I could find in the temple records during this period for Robert's family, which suggests that most of Elizabeth's England trip had been spent researching her own ancestors. That same day Ann Hallat and John Hallat, the younger siblings of Elizabeth's mother, were baptized vicariously.[191] Elizabeth spent 17 days during the next five weeks doing temple work for most of her Hallat and Cooper aunts and uncles including baptisms, endowments, and sealings, obviously making good on her research in England after a delay of six years. Perhaps fear that the temples might be confiscated had moved her to get it done. There were several more ordinances performed on a single day in March and two more days in May. Work was done for both males and females, which suggests that one of her boys was helping, or perhaps an old friend from Leeds.

In October 1889, just six months after being sustained as President of the Church, Wilford Woodruff ordered the destruction of the Endowment House and published the following notice in the *Salt Lake Tribune*: "I have refused to give any recommendations for the performance of plural marriages since I have been President…and have instructed that they should not be solemnized."[192] But the Supreme Court upheld the Edmunds-Tucker Act on May 19, 1890. The Corporation of the L.D.S. Church was ended and referred to as the "late church" in government documents. The anti-polygamy Manifesto was issued as press release on September 24 and then sustained by the membership in General Conference in October 1890.

During the year 1890 Mary Hallat Wrigley, the aunt who had who had taken Elizabeth into her family as a teenager died in Birkenhead, England, and so did Mary's son-in-law William Rose, leaving Elizabeth's cousin Elizabeth Rose a widow for the second time. The 1891 British census shows Elizabeth Rose as a widow keeping a "company house" with four lodgers in Southport where Elizabeth and Sariah Pixton had stayed with her seven years earlier. She was assisted in the house by her step-daughter, 27 year old Elizabeth Ann Rose. Her son Ernest Rose was employed as a railway clerk and her daughter Mary Elizabeth Blackburn was employed as a milliner. All of her family except Elizabeth Ann[193] would eventually join her son George in Taylorsville with Elizabeth Pixton's support and become Mormons.

---

[190] It is likely that other of Elizabeth's relatives were also endowed. I am only listing those for whom I have actual proof. Much information may have been lost.

[191] Her mother's other younger sibling was Mary Wrigley, who was still living. She died the following year.

[192] Richard S. Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy, a History,* 1986, p. 138.

[193] Elizabeth Ann Rose died in the summer of 1891, just months after the census was recorded as of April 1.

Eliza Spencer

In December 1891 at the age of 71 Elizabeth was ordained a Relief Society President for the third time, where she served in Taylorsville until her death 13 years later. She replaced Eliza Spencer,[194] who had retired because of advanced years, and re-appointed Eliza's counselors Mary P. Bennion and Mary Ann Webster to assist her.

There were 20 sisters present for the meeting, which was conducted by Bishop Bennion, who said he had consulted with Brother Cannon,[195] who "thought it right to accept (Sister Spencer's) resignation. I believe Sister Spencer has filled this position honorably and to the best of her ability." Elizabeth and her two counselors were ordained to their offices. President Spencer's daughter Eliza Bennion resigned as secretary and Alice Harker was chosen to replace her. The minutes of the meeting continued,[196]

> Sister Pixton then made some remarks. Said her heart was full…this was the third time she had been ordained to this office. "I hope the Lord will bless us and fill us with the Holy Spirit, that we may be united and work together for the good of this society." Bishop Bennion said, "Sister Pixton is well qualified for this position and has the means and time at her disposal and with the help of the Lord will do well and if there is (sic) any little feelings existing, I hope they will be banished from their midst and that you may act in unison."

Uncharacteristically for Elizabeth, her name had not appeared in the Taylorsville Relief Society's minutes for at least the previous two years, although her daughter Elizabeth Harker and her daughter-in-law Amelia Pixton were regular attendees. That fact along with the bishop's mention of "any little feelings" and Elizabeth's hope to be "united and work together" raises the possibility that some issues existed between the two presidents. Even so, Elizabeth retained Eliza's two counselors, who had also served with Elizabeth in her first term as president a decade earlier. It was decided to hold meetings only once a month, the first Tuesday after Fast Day. This was Elizbeth's style—she always felt that attendance would be better if the meetings were less frequent.

Elizabeth's first meeting was a testimony meeting in January 1892 with 19 members present. She told the sisters that she had experienced "a severe fall which makes me feel very mean." In April Elizabeth reported on a sisters' meeting at conference in the Assembly Hall, where she was instructed that it was better that the sisters "own their own houses to hold meetings in and have them set apart for what they are intended for. In Dixie they own their own (Relief Society) house, furnished and finished." She encouraged the sisters to subscribe to the *Exponent* magazine and appointed teachers to visit the sisters in their homes. At their annual meeting on June 21 Elizabeth informed the sisters that it was 24 years ago to the day that the Society had been re-organized in Deseret. Sister Isabella Horne, the Salt Lake Stake Relief Society President and Elizabeth's former president in the 14th Ward visited the meeting

---

[194] Eliza Spencer was the second wife of Joseph Harker, whose daughter Eliza Ann had been among the closest friends of Willard and Elizabeth Pixton (Jr.). Joseph and Eliza had secretly separated around 1862, but he continued to support her financially. Before her release Eliza had missed all but two Relief Society meetings in the previous six months due to illness. She died in 1895.

[195] Probably Angus Cannon, president of the Salt Lake Stake.

[196] North Jordan Ward Relief Society Minutes, pages 561-562, Church History Library LR 4239 21.

along with Sister Bathsheba Smith, who both spoke, encouraging subscriptions to the *Exponent* and informing them that $12 each year was being assessed in each ward to sustain the Deseret Hospital.

They continued to meet monthly. On November 8, 1892, the minutes quoted Elizabeth, "I feel well in spirit, and since I came here I feel better than I did in body. I was not well today. Since I met with you last I have had the privilege of going to do work for the dead in the Manti Temple." The sisters voted to donate the entire year's balance of $57 in cash from their treasury to the temple.

Four days later Elizabeth's oldest child, Charlotte Pixton Van Dyke, died at the age of 53 with "heart failure" at her home in Salt Lake City, where she and her family had moved from Ogden the previous year. Charlotte had given birth to 11 children, ten of whom survived her.

George and Zella Blackburn 1893

On January 25, 1893 Elizabeth's English cousin George Wrigley Blackburn married the bishop's granddaughter Zella Susanna Harker[197] in the Manti Temple. Zellie had grown up two doors away from Robert Pixton Jr. George had been living in Utah over seven years by this time. If they had waited three months longer, they could have been among the first to be married in the Salt Lake Temple, which was dedicated at April Conference. Elizabeth taught the sisters in Relief Society that this was the greatest temple of all. "We need to do the work for the dead." She spoke of a woman from the south who had been baptized 25,000 times for the dead.[198]

On May 9, 1893, the New York Stock Exchange crashed, part of a world-wide depression that lasted four years. The causes of the failure were multiple, but it was associated with the collapse of the bubble produced by the Gilded Age of the 1870s and 1880s. It was associated with a drop in wheat prices in 1893, losses to silver mining in the west including Utah, the rise of the populist People's Party, and failures of overextended railroads and the shipping industry.

In August, Elizabeth emphasized to the sisters the necessity of looking after the poor in the distress and hard times that had come. She announced that she was an agent for the *Exponent* and wished to get subscribers.

As financial affairs worsened in the winter, Elizabeth had more advice for the sisters.

> Woman's day is dawning. We must fit and qualify ourselves. Let us look to our little temporal affairs. There is a financial crisis, and the great businessmen all realize it, but the Lord will overrule all things. Pray for me, all of you, that I may be enabled to do more good. Our religion

[197] Zella's father William Harker was the first male white child born in Utah on September 26, 1847 in Echo Canyon just prior to the second party of pioneers' arrival in the valley.
[198] That would be possible in the 17 years since the temple opened if a person did 30 baptisms per week.

> is love, and my desire is to do all the good I can. This is a day to be awake and doing. We have to put works with faith.[199]

In a meeting with his counselors and the Twelve prior to General Conference that April in 1894, President Wilford Woodruff said that he had received a new revelation for the Church:

> I have felt we are too strict in regard to some of our temple ordinances. This is especially the case in regard to husbands and parents who are dead. Heretofore we have not permitted wives to be sealed to their dead husbands unless such husbands were in the Church, nor have we permitted children to be sealed to dead unbaptized parents. This is wrong I feel…. The Lord has told me that it is right for children to be sealed to their parents, and they to their parents just as far back as we can possibly obtain the records.[200]

President George Q. Cannon responded that he was "…thankful for what has been revealed. This matter has weighed for a long time on my mind."[201] Through the inspiration of President Wilford Woodruff, restrictions on sealings based on probable worthiness of the dead were thereafter abandoned and the sealings of families through all generations became the main focus of temple work.

This had the effect of redoubling Elizabeth's efforts in the temple and her encouragement of the sisters to do temple work themselves. And the depression drove her to repeatedly urge the sisters to give more to the poor. The visiting sisters were assigned to carry the message to the non-attenders and to gather information on families in need. Fourteen members gave donations at the Relief Society meeting in May. Elizabeth herself donated stockings and coal, the value of which equaled the total of the other sisters combined, a pattern that was evident in most of the meetings.

The annual Relief Society conference in North Jordan in June 1894 was not attended by the General Presidency, who failed to arrive as expected. Elizabeth's spoke on the uses of adversity. "I am thankful for past trials related to (my) experiences while in Nauvoo." In July, Elizabeth continued on her two favorite topics, urging the sisters to attend to the wants of those who are in need and to do all we can in the temple for our relatives.

Among the financial casualties in Utah of the depression were the Teasdel stores, which went bankrupt that year. A long investigative story on Teasdel's bankruptcy appeared in the *Deseret News* October 24, 1894, calling it "the largest and farthest reaching business failure in the history of Utah." However, the article was not critical of Samuel Teasdel, opining that,

> The store had been as solid and immovable as the Rock of Gibraltar…. His problems were due to the fact that he was unable to collect from men whom he had trusted for merchandise—some of them to the amount of many thousands of dollars—years ago. Naught but expressions of sympathy and kindness are heard concerning Mr. Teasdel today, for he has borne his burdens long and uncomplainingly.

A bankruptcy sale was advertised on January 13, 1895, after Teasdel had been successfully sued for $25,000 by William F. Neslen.[202] I wonder what affect this had on Elizabeth and whether she supported

---

[199] Minutes, pages 618-619, Church History Library LR 4239 21.
[200] Jonathan A. Stapley, *Adoptive Sealing Ritual in Mormonism*, Journal of Mormon History, Vol. 37. No. 2. p. 108.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Neslen had worked for Teasdel for 32 years as store manager and had his own store in Nephi.

Teasdel financially through the ordeal. On March 24 the *Deseret News* announced that part of the Pixton family had joined in the bankruptcy proceedings. It was Martha representing her three children, Seth, Jane, and Olive, ages 19-14, who were owed $8,606 for a loan which had been advanced to Teasdel and for $682 in back rent. They settled for a trade involving real estate. Evidently Martha had acted independently from Elizabeth and her children, who did not sue Teasdel. In fact, from what I know of Elizabeth she probably aided him financially to help him get back into business.

The bankruptcy did not destroy Teasdel, who appears to have been back in business by the beginning of 1896, when Utah achieved statehood. However, he moved back into only the two northern stores, and J. P. Gardner, who ran a clothing store, began renting the two stores on the south fronting 40 feet on Main Street. Samuel Teasdel's son Frank sub-leased space from his father in one of the north buildings for a bicycle shop.

J. P. Gardner store 1909

In February Ernest Rose, who was now 20, arrived at New York aboard the *Aurania* from Southport via Liverpool, the second of Elizabeth Rose's children to immigrate. He located in Murray and became a poultry farmer and then worked many years at the smelter.

In March Elizabeth spoke to the sisters on her philosophy of child rearing. "Children come into this world with master spirits. We can lead them, but we cannot drive them." After October conference she returned to report Sister Isabella Horne's instruction regarding the faithful collection of old clothes by the teachers on their monthly visits and told them not to feel like they are begging, for the Relief Society was organized for that purpose: the giving to the poor.

Among the many Relief Society meetings recorded in the minutes of the North Jordan Ward appears this entry for July 27, 1897. "Relief Society cash received: E. A. Bennion, .25, S. J. Harker .25, H. Williams, .20, J. Frame, .15, Elizabeth Pixton .50." On August 10 Elizabeth presided. They were having meetings every two weeks at that time. There were 22 members present, and as usual Elizabeth doubled the highest donation. She spoke:

> I think if I were the secretary that I should not call all the names. There's some that attend only about once a year. This is detrimental to them as the Prophet Joseph Smith said every virtuous woman would want her name enrolled. Every time we come to another meeting we get fed.

After that meeting the minutes of the North Jordan Ward Relief Society ceased or were lost, but Elizabeth continued on as president.

The following February the battleship *Maine* was blown up in Havana Harbor beginning the Spanish American War. In General Conference the first presidency of Wilford Woodruff, George Q. Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith responded positively to Governor Well's call for volunteers in the newly declared war with Spain, citing the Mormon's response to the call for the Mormon Battalion.

Elizabeth made another trip that fall to Dixie where she and her deceased siblings Sarah, Mary, and Francis Cooper were sealed to their parents in the St. George Temple. Anne was not sealed, which suggests to me that she was still living at that time.[203]

Thomas Kearns

Elizabeth had returned from St. George when an article appeared in the *Salt Lake Herald* on December 17, 1898, announcing "the biggest transaction in Salt Lake City history" as Thomas Kearns[204] bought the property containing the J. P. Gardner clothing store and S. P. Teasdale Company stores for $85,000. "The buildings are very old and dilapidated but bring in a handsome monthly rental." S. P. Teasdel filed a quit claim deed on the property, and the money went to Elizabeth, her children,[205] and Martha's children.

This is Mary J. B. Pixton's view of the transaction:

> A few years before her death, (Elizabeth's) property was condemned, so she called her sons around her and talked things over. She was getting along in years, what would be best to do—build a large new building or sell? …They decided for her sake to sell. It would not be such a worry to her.

Kearns building in 21st Century

Kearns did not immediately develop the property. Samuel Teasdel continued to operate his remaining two stores with his sons until he died at the age of 69 of pneumonia in 1901, and J. P. Gardner continued until the Pixton stores were razed to make way for the new Kearns Building, which was finally erected in 1911, after which Gardner rented part of the ground floor retail space of Salt Lake's first skyscraper. The building still stands on Main Street, now in the U. S. National Register of Historic Places.

---

[203] In FamilySearch an additional sibling to Elizabeth named Lucy Cooper is listed without any source, who has the same birth and death years as Anne Cooper. The fact that Lucy was not sealed to Elizabeth's parents at that time suggests that she never existed.

[204] Kearns was an enterprising miner who had become the co-owner of the highly successful Silver King Mine in Park City and one of the wealthiest men in Utah. Later he became a U. S. Senator. His palatial house on South Temple is now the Utah governor's mansion.

[205] Charlotte's children, who as Elizabeth's grandchildren would seem to have been eligible, were not mentioned in the article.

All Latter-day Saints in Salt Lake County were members of the Salt Lake Stake until January 28, 1900, when two new stakes were organized in the valley, the Jordan Stake for the south part and the Granite Stake between it and the old Salt Lake Stake. Taylorsville became part of the Granite Stake with ten other wards, which by 1904 numbered 14. The Relief Society of the Granite Stake of Zion was organized in Mill Creek on January 28, 1900, by the apostles Anton H. Lund, Francis M. Lyman, Abraham O. Woodruff, Seymour B. Young, and the new stake president Frank Y. Taylor. They chose Emma S. Woodruff[206] to be president. Her counselors were Mary P. Young[207] and Katherine H. Brockbank.[208] The secretary was Armeda C. S. Young.[209]

L-R: Katherine Brockbank, Emma Smith Woodruff, Mary Pratt Young.

The first monthly meeting of officers of the stake Relief Society was held February 29, 1900 and attended by the presidencies of the stake and ward Relief Societies. Isabella Horne, president of the Salt Lake Stake Relief Society, was present, and so was Elizabeth Pixton representing Taylorsville. Elizabeth attended every subsequent stake Relief Society meeting but one for the rest of her life, speaking briefly in each. She seldom gave a report of her ward, instead always imparted a bit of wisdom. For example, here is her contribution on June 1, 1900, as Armeda Snow Young recorded it.[210]

> As it has been spoken of that we can live but one day at time reminds me of the saying "the trials of the present day require us to watch and pray." I did not hardly like the idea of going to the grove, but I said the Lord will overrule all things as He always does, and we won't go. I think sometimes the only weapon a woman has is her tongue and we must learn to control it for every idle word and every evil word we use we will have to give an account of… We have to be tried in all things, so we will be more able to judge… We should shun the very appearance of evil. (I feel) to pray for them that are wayward and giddy.

---

[206] Emma was true Mormon royalty, the seventh wife of Wilford Woodruff and a niece of Abraham O. Smoot. Since the death of Phebe Woodruff in 1885 she was his "public wife" until his death in 1898 and was now a widow. She was born at Adam-ondi-Ahman during the Missouri persecution and had served on the Salt Lake Stake Relief Society General Board and as a temple worker. One of the apostles who ordained her was her 28 year old son. Her six children were all married. She had been a charter member of the early Salt Lake 14th Ward Relief Society with Elizabeth Pixton.

[207] Mary Pratt Young was a daughter of Parley P. Pratt and was married to a step-son of Brigham Young.

[208] Katherine Howard Brockbank was a pioneer who came to the Valley at the age of 10 from Belfast, Ireland. She was 40 and had 13 children, seven living.

[209] Armeda Celestia Snow Young deserves special notice for her impressive minutes, which were taken in shorthand and transcribed, bringing Elizabeth Pixton's contributions to the stake meetings to light in her exact words. Armeda was a daughter of Lorenzo Snow through his 4th wife Harriet Squires, part of Snow's family settlement of Box Elder. Her husband was Brigham Morris Young, a son of Brigham Young through his 25th wife Margaret Pierce. She was 45 years old with seven children ages 2-22.

[210] This and the following quotes come from Granite Stake Relief Society Minutes and Records, Church History Library LR 3379 14.

Both Elizabeth and President Emma Woodruff were missing from the first meeting of 1901. Sister Katherine H. Brockbank asked that the Lord bless those in trouble and the afflicted ones and that the sisters pray for "our president and Sister Pixton." Both women were back for the February meeting, President Emma Woodruff declared that the Lord had blessed her in her sorrow. Elizabeth was back too and spoke on one of her favorite topics.

> We are dependent people on the Lord, but He will not forsake us if we put our trust in Him. Now sisters, if there is anything I feel more anxious about, it is for the dead. The temples are erected for us to go in them and work for the dead. We are getting old. I am 81 years of age and can't do as much as younger people. Do not wait until you get old (to go the temple).

She had additional direct advice for the sisters in the next meeting:

> While I have been listening to some of my sisters, they have said that they were not speakers, and we are not all speakers. I will say we are not mute. God never made us so. I think that we make a mistake when we say we are not speakers. "He that waiteth to be commanded in all things is a slothful servant." We are to be workers, that's what the Relief Society was organized for, and we want to be helpmates to our husbands. We weren't taken from his foot to be trampled upon or from the head to lead, but from his side to work along with him and be his equal. Now we want to be, and we profess to be women of God. You know, sisters, this religion of ours is nothing new. We have some glorious hymns that will teach us our duties and mission and that glorious hymn "O My Father!" Now don't say you are not speakers. Open your mouths and God will put something in them for you to say. We talk of getting old. It is these weak bodies of ours that are getting old, not our spirits.

February 12 was the general meeting of the Relief Society at the quarterly Granite Stake conference. Elizabeth spoke in the afternoon session followed by their conference visitor, "Aunt" Bathsheba Smith, the only living woman who had attended the first Relief Society meeting in Nauvoo. Bathsheba recalled for the audience,

> There were only seventeen of us at the first organization. We had brother Joseph with us. We had him for a number of times, and he gave us valuable instructions. The last time he was with us, according to his prayer, he would not be with us long.

On May 14, 1901, Elizabeth spoke again at the officers meeting.

> When we can love one another and our neighbors as ourselves, we are living pretty well up to the mark. I endorse every word that has been said, and if we love one another and those who are trying to do the will of the Lord we are growing and cannot find time to see the faults of others. May the Lord help us to keep in the path of duty that we may go back in his presence.

Elizabeth related to the sisters her experience in being in meetings with the Prophet Joseph Smith. She also spoke of being present when Sister (Isabella) Horne was put in as President of the 14th Ward Relief Society. She spoke of her visit to her old home in England and related instances showing how she was led to her relatives by strangers when she did not know their names.

On September 28 Elizabeth's counselor, Mary Webster, stood to give Elizabeth's report on the Taylorsville Ward as Sister Pixton did not feel able, after which Mary Pratt Young arose and said, "Sister

Pixton is feeling very poorly. She would like the sisters to pray for her, which privilege we have as sisters to bless each other." Sister Young called the sisters forward to pray for Elizabeth and asked Sister Armeda Snow Young to be mouth. After the united prayers of the sisters, President Pixton arose and expressed a desire to speak as she was felling so much better.

Armeda Young

> Fifty-three years ago yesterday I entered these valleys. May the Lord help us to bless and comfort each other. The more good we do, the more good we are able to do. That is my testimony, sisters. I lived in Nauvoo when the Prophet Joseph was slain. May the Lord Bless us and give us strength to do our duty.

Counselor Mary P. Young spoke, "Sisters, isn't that a testimony to us that the Lord hears and answers our prayers."

Here are a few more pieces of Elizabeth's of advice for the sisters:

> It has never been a task for me to bear testimony. We should all have a testimony to bear that we were not ashamed of and not be weary in well doing. Keep the Spirit of the Almighty. Feel to bless and not find fault. Ask the Lord to bless us with more charity. Learn to be more punctual. We have the example from our President Frank Y. Taylor. He loves punctuality, so do I. May the Lord bless us all.
>
> If there is anything we should pray for most it is charity.
>
> It has been said here that the race is not to the swift nor the strong, but to those who endure to the end… The reason it is hard for (mothers) to control their children is because they (are) mature spirits.

Counselor Mary Pratt Young was presiding at the officers meeting on July 5, 1902, when she said, "We will give our Mother Sister Pixton as much time as she wishes to occupy, as we are always glad to hear from her. President Elizabeth Pixton has no desire for anything, only to do her duty and help to bring about righteousness." Elizabeth responded, "We cannot enjoy the spirit of the Lord if contending with our neighbor. Let us try to serve our Father with all our hearts." The sisters had taken to calling her "Mother Sister Pixton."

Bessie Blackburn

The minutes for August 9, 1902, noted that President Elizabeth Pixton spoke of the sorrow that comes to our young girls who marry out of the Church, and of the spirit of destroying offspring creeping in amongst us. She felt that we should instruct the young married people that they marry to multiply and replenish, not to destroy. Stake Relief Society Counselor Katherine H. Brockbank said, "The counsel of Stake President Edwin Bennion and our Mother, Sister Pixton, are of great value."

Elizabeth Pixton's cousin Elizabeth Rose and her 37 year old daughter Bessie Blackburn arrived in Boston on November 1, 1902, on their way to Taylorsville, where they moved in with Elizabeth.

In January's stake Relief Society meeting Elizabeth spoke again.

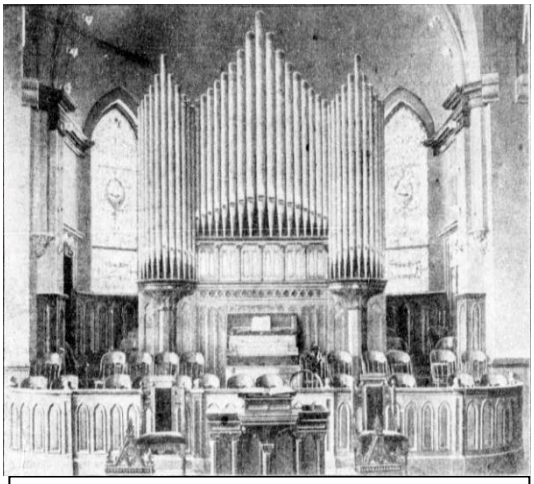
> My dear sisters. I hear you speak of your trials, what would we be good for if it wasn't for our trials. We have to be proven as the gold in the furnace. It's our trials and tribulations that's got to prove and purify us—and if we get a salvation we will have to earn it. I hope that we might watch as well as pray.

Relief Society Secretary Armeda Young noted in May that Sister Pixton, our mother, said she did not feel very well—felt that she was failing fast—did not know how much longer she would be permitted to remain in the flesh, but she desired to do her duty while she did live, and wished to bless the sisters. At the quarterly Relief Society conference on May 12, 1903, Elizabeth was sitting on the stand the other ward Relief Society presidents and also Bathsheba W. Smith and her counselor Annie T. Hyde of the General Board. The sisters referred to Bathsheba as "aunt" and to Elizabeth as "mother." President Elizabeth Pixton of Taylorsville taught that our main object was the relief of the poor, the destitute, the widow and the orphan.

In July 1903 the apostle Abraham O. Woodruff, son of the stake Relief Society president, attended the officers meeting expressing interest in the building of the Granite Stake Tabernacle. He hoped the brethren and sisters would give with a willing hand and heart. It would be the finest stake house in the Church. The Apostle John Henry Smith was also present. Elizabeth had already donated.

The minutes of the August meeting reported that Elizabeth spoke of the many trials that come to us and the need to sympathize with families in trouble. She felt well in the cause of God. Later in the meeting she spoke of the many dead she had worked for in the temple, urging the sisters to take hold of this work while they are able. This was the last advice she would give to the sisters.

The Granite Stake Tabernacle was dedicated December 27, 1903. Elizabeth had donated its pipe organ, which according to the *Deseret News* that week cost $3,000[211] and had 829 pipes.



Granite Stake Pipe Organ 1903

The fourth quarterly conference of the Granite Stake Relief Society took place February 4, 1904. Elizabeth sat on the stand, but there is no record that she spoke.

She died the next month on March 20, 1904. She was 84. The following appeared the next day in the *Deseret News.*

> Mrs. Elizabeth Pixton, wife of the late Robert Pixton and a pioneer resident of this state, died last night at her home in Taylorsville after a brief illness of acute pneumonia. Mrs. Pixton was to all appearances well and hearty on Saturday when she made a trip to Salt Lake. But on returning home she complained of not feeling well and suddenly grew worse until death relieved her of her suffering.

[211] That is $98,013 in 2022 dollars.

Mary Janetta Bateman Pixton had been married to Elizabeth's grandson Robert Simeon Pixton for eight years when Elizabeth died and knew her since her own birth. As one of Elizabeth's mourners she wrote this tribute years later.

> She was a wonderful woman, struggling through all the hardships that most women had to go through at that time, from the direst poverty gradually on up until she became very well off…. She was a true and faithful Latter-day Saint. A true and loyal friend to the poor, many hundreds of dollars she gave to those in need. She never let the left hand know what the right hand did. In sickness, in death, she was there and that to bless. Yes, and many a mother has been comforted and blessed in early days when she has placed their newborn babe to their breast. While president of the Relief Society and their new meeting house was built, she bought all the dishes and things needed for their room--her family never knew what money she gave to such things. I heard a lady say once that every time she went into the Granite Stake Tabernacle building…she said to herself, "Sister Pixton's pipe organ…." She gave hundreds, yes, I can safely say thousands of dollars to such causes. How wonderful it is to be blessed with the means to give, but far greater it is to be blessed of the Lord with the heart and power to give.

From the minutes of the Granite Stake officer meeting on April 30, "Counselor Mary Pratt Young spoke of our beloved mother, Sister Pixton—of the resolution of respect that had been given by the Relief Society Board, and sent to the *Exponent*, which would be read."

> The Relief Society officers of the Granite Stake of Zion, to which she belonged, wishing to do honor to her memory have prepared the following resolutions:
>
> Whereas our much esteemed sister and collaborator, has by the hand of divine providence been removed from our midst, and has, we feel confidently assured, gone to a better world, we, her sisters, who know of her loving deeds and appreciate her many noble qualities, desire to express our tender sympathy for the bereaved family, and to acknowledge her labors and ministrations of kindness, as a member of the Relief Society, and also a friend and neighbor in the best sense of the word. Therefore, be it
>
> Resolved, we do humbly testify that charity and humility were leading traits of her character, and that her last act the day before her death was one of charity, and that her simple and unassuming manner was beautifully illustrated in her last request, "that (her) coffin should be plain and no flowers placed upon it, as the money could be used to better advantage."
>
> Resolved, that we tender our heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family of the deceased and that they and the sisters of the society over which she presided so long may follow her noble example of diligence and faithfulness.
>
> Resolved that these resolutions be recorded in our stake record and also presented to the family and published in the *Woman's Exponent*.

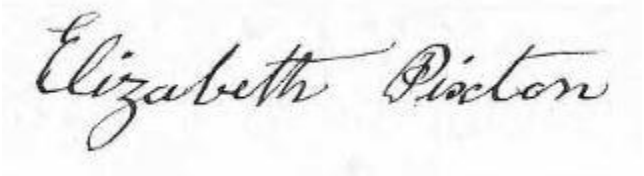
Elizabeth left a will directing that her personal estate be divided among her five living children. The children of Martha[212] and of Elizabeth's deceased daughter Charlotte won a decision in court that

[212] Martha Silcock Pixton died on April 27, 1916 of stomach cancer after an illness of 16 weeks. She was three days short of 64 years old.

Elizabeth's residual money should be considered part of Robert's estate and should be divided among all the children. However, according to articles in the *Deseret News* and the *Salt Lake Herald* in September 1905, about $33,000 had simply disappeared including two mysterious withdrawals of $3,000 in 1903 and $5,200 in October 1899. The attorneys interviewed all the children and close acquaintances of Elizabeth including her "friend" Elizabeth Blackburn Rose, who was living at the Pixton house, and were convinced that none of her children had received any of it.

Of course, the $3,000 withdrawal in 1903 is no mystery. It went for the Granite Tabernacle organ. I suspect the rest was given away anonymously by Elizabeth in her fashion, "the left hand knowing not knowing what the right hand did."

Mother Sister President Elizabeth Pixton



Epilogue – The Wrigley Family in America

In May 1905 George and Zella Harker Blackburn joined in the exodus from Taylorsville of several Harker and other families, which had been caused by extensive smoke from the Midvale smelter bringing damage to their crops. They located in Shelley, Idaho with Zellie's mother Frances Elizabeth Wright, a widow. At the time of the census in 1910 George was 42 and Zellie was 34 with six kids ages 2-14. He was farming and working for the Harkers with their sheep. His neighbors were several Bateman brothers from West Jordan. Zella had stillborn babies in 1914 and 1915, their cause of death recorded as "nephritis of mother." Zella passed away on July 5, 1915, at the age of 39 from Bright's disease, kidney failure. George married Jennie Janet Wilkins in the Episcopal Church in Salt Lake City on December 30, 1917, an English immigrant who had arrived in 1912. He kept the family together on the farm near Shelley for a few years and then moved into town where he was employed as the high school janitor for 12 years. He died in 1944.

In 1905 George's sister Mary Elizabeth Blackburn, a 40 year old spinster, married Joseph Gerrard, a Taylorsville farmer who had immigrated with his brothers from Lancashire, England around 1881. After Elizabeth Pixton's death, Mary Elizabeth's mother Elizabeth Rose moved in with the Gerrards near Joseph's two brothers, John and Ephraim, who lived next door to Robert Pixton Jr. She had one child, Gladys Gerrard, on July 31, 1910. Mary Elizabeth was baptized a Mormon April 26, 1919, six years after her husband's death. She died in Taylorsville in 1928 at the age of 62.

Ernest Rose became a U.S. citizen in Salt Lake City on December 2, 1913, and married Ellen Flossy Davis in Ogden a year later when he was 38 and she was 30. He worked at the copper smelter. They had no children, and Ellen died in 1838. Ernest died in Provo of a heart attack in 1944.

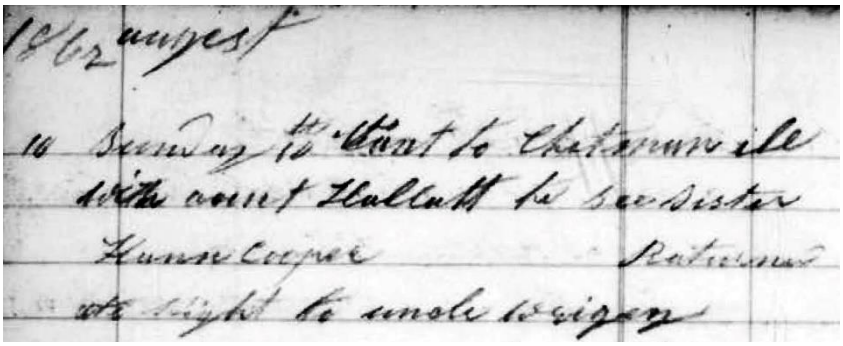
Elizabeth Wrigley Blackburn Rose died in Taylorsville on October 17, 1919, at the age of 83.

Appendix

When Robert Pixton arrived on his mission to England in 1862, before his transfer to the branch in Nottingham, Robert spent about two weeks visiting his Pixton relatives and many of the Coopers and Hallatts, the family of his wife Elizabeth Cooper. For most of that time he was staying with Mary Hallatt and her husband Joseph Wrigley, with whom Elizabeth spent her early teenage years. Mary was the youngest sister of Elizabeth's mother. A careful analysis of these visits yields important genealogical clues regarding these families. I am especially interested in Robert's brief contact with Anne Cooper, Elizabeth's only surviving sister.

In August 1998 Paul B. Pixton edited and published a valuable transcription by Esther Moulton of Robert Pixton's missionary diary that covered the first year of his mission to England. It is attached to Robert's Memories in Family Search KWNV-ZVN, and the original journal can be viewed at the Church History Library as MS 5474. Because my transcription and interpretation differ from Esther Moulton's in some important ways, I am providing here some images of Robert's handwritten pages with Esther Moulton's transcription, my own transcription, and the interpretation that I used in this book for readers to compare.

This is Robert's original entry for Sunday, August 10, 1862, written about four days after he arrived in Liverpool. A short time later, probably about August 20, he re-wrote all of his entries from July 27 through August 13th, improving some of the spelling and grammar and adding a few new details. This allows us to look at two versions of his activities for that period.



Esther Moulton's transcription:

> 10 Sunday 10th Want to Chesterville (Chesterfield) with aunt Hullutt to see sister (Kunn?) Batemanes at night to uncle wrigey.

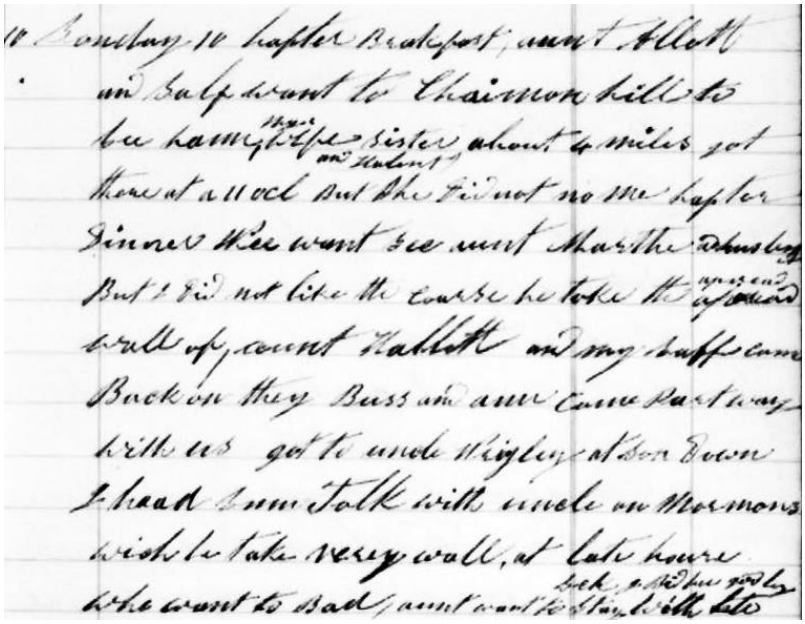
My reading:

> 10 Sunday 10th Went to Chatman ill with aunt Hallatt to see Sister Hann Cooper Returned at night to uncle Wrigly

Cleaned up: (Correcting spelling and name of destination)

> Went to Cheetham Hill with Aunt Hallatt to see (Elizabeth's) sister Ann Cooper. Returned at night to Uncle Wrigley.

Here is Robert's second entry for the same day.



Ester Moulton's transcription:

> 10 Sonday 10 hafter Brakfast, aunt Allott and Salf want to Chaimon hill to see ha[ ] [ ] wife sister and [ ] about 4 miles got there at a 11 ocl But She did not no me hafter Dinner Wee want see aunt Marthe [ ] boy But I did not like the course he toke the [ ] [ ] wull of, aunt Hallott and my salf came Back on they Buss and ann came part way with us got to uncle Wrigley at Son Down I head sum Talk with uncle on Mormons wich he take verey wall, at late houre whe want to Bad, aunt want to stay with [ ] [ ] I Bid her good by

My reading:

> 10 Sunday 10 hafter Brekfast aunt Allott and Self went to Chaimon hill to see hann, mye wifes sister and husband about 4 miles got there at a 11 ocl But She did not no me hafter dinner wee went see aunt Martha and husband but I did not like the course he toke the uposend will of, aunt Hallett and my self came Back on they Buss and ann came part way with us got to uncle Wrigley at sun down. I head sum Talk with uncle on Mormons wich he take verey well, at late hour whe went to Bad, aunt went to bed. I Bid her good bye Stay. with late.

Cleaned up version:

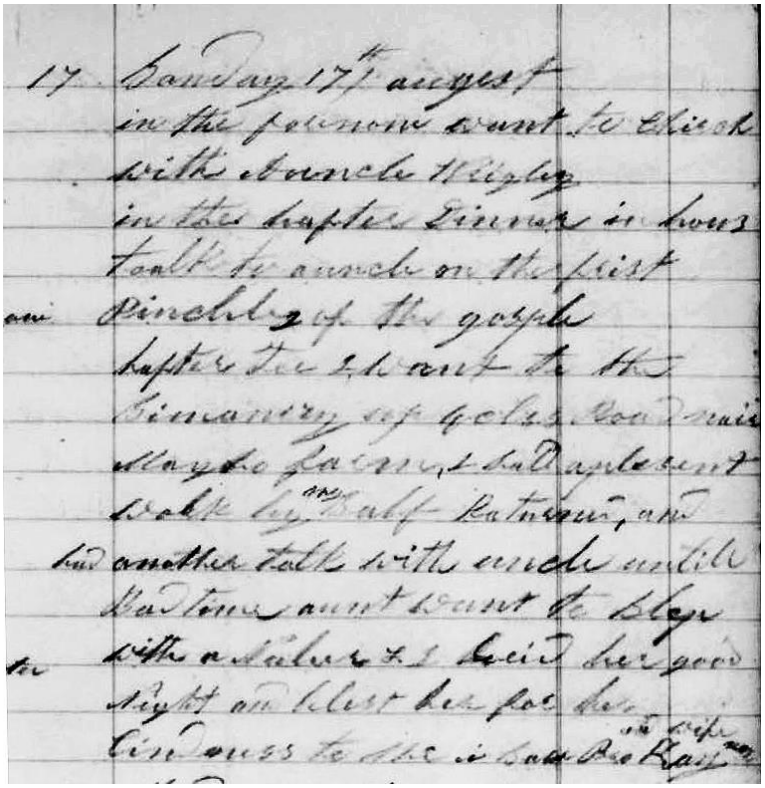
> After breakfast, Aunt Hallatt and I went to Cheetham Hill to see Anne, my wife's sister, and her husband, about four miles (probably from Wrigley's). Got there at 11 o'clock, but she did not know me. After dinner we went to see Aunt Martha (Cooper) and her husband, but I didn't like the course he took, (an opposing position.) Aunt Hallatt and I came back on the bus and Anne came part way with us. We got to Uncle Wrigley's at sundown. I had some talk with Uncle on Mormons, which he took very well. Aunt went to bed. I bid her goodbye. Stayed with (Uncle) late.

Analysis:

Having looked at the 1861 census, I can tell that to get to Martha's house they crossed the River Irwell north of Salford to visit a neighborhood on the west end of Cheetham Hill called Kersal which is about three miles north of where the Wrigleys lived. Anne and her husband George Holgate lived on Coke Street. Since Robert and Mary Hallatt were on foot it appears that the homes of the Anne and Martha were within easy walking distance of each other, so they may have both been in Kersal. Aunt Martha's husband was named Thomas Vosper. He was a butler who worked for a 62 year old bachelor named James Hatton, an iron merchant who employed 13 men and two boys. Perhaps that explains his haughty reception of Robert. They had four children between seven and 15.

Robert wrote an account for Sunday, August 17 in the first version which was not repeated in the second, although elements seem to appear in his revised account of August 10th.

Here is the original:



This is Esther Moulton's transcription:

> 17 Sunday 17th august in the forenone want to chirch with Huncle Wrigley in the hafter Dinner in hous toalk to auncle on the first pinchls of the gosple hafter Tee I want to the Simanery up [Eccles] Road nair [May ho fairn], I had aplesent walk by myself [ ] Raturned, and had another talk with uncle untile Bad time aunt want to Slep with a nabur & I beid her good Night and blest her for her kindenes to me in [ ] Bro Kay and wife

I took no issue with her transcription. Here is my “cleaned up” version.

Sunday, August 17. In the forenoon went to church with Uncle Wrigley. After dinner at his house, I talked to Uncle on the first principles of the Gospel. After tea I went to the seminary up Eccles Road near Mayo farm. I had a pleasant walk by myself, returned, and had another talk with Uncle until bedtime. Aunt went to a neighbor’s house to sleep, and I bid her good night and blessed her for her kindness to me and to Brother Kay and his wife.